THE OLD TABARD INN, SOUTHWARK.

HOTEL PLANNING. By Stanley Hamp [A.].

Read before the Royal Institute of British Architects, Monday, 8th April 1907.

IN approaching our subject this evening I have felt it very difficult to deal fully with the many important questions which arise when considering hotel construction. I fear that there must of necessity be numerous omissions, as the time at one's disposal is so limited; I trust, therefore, that as many as possible present here to-night will join in the discussion afterwards and make up for my deficiencies. I did not fully realise until deep in the preparation of this Paper how wide a range it covered; but I will endeavour to put before you a few of the principles of planning which I feel are important to the proper construction and management of modern hotels.

In looking at our subject the first question to be asked is, "What is an hotel?" and then one's mind naturally travels back to the time when the old-fashioned inns, so picturesque and historical, were the only accommodation provided for travellers. One then begins to consider the causes for the rapid strides which have been made in this branch of commercial life during and since the latter part of the last century.

Let us then ask ourselves, "What is an hotel?"—a question which is more worthy of consideration than at first sight appears. The word or designation "hotel" is derived from "hostel," a palace or lordly house, and is usually described in dictionaries as an inn or public-house. The term "hotel" indicates a place or building wherein can be obtained rest and refreshment, either temporarily or for lengthened periods, at a charge consistent with the accommodation and the fare afforded. There are licensed and unlicensed hotels: the former alone are privileged to trade in excisable liquors, the latter being designated temperance hotels. Strange though it may appear, although most hotels have a licence, there is no such thing

as an hotel licence properly so called. As matters now stand, any public-house or third-rate boarding-house can style itself "hotel," with the result that strangers are apt to find themselves often in very uncongenial quarters.

It is both interesting and curious to note how the development in hotel construction has gone hand in hand with the improvements in locomotion. I propose to go back to the old coaching days so beloved by Dickens and forming the background of so many interesting incidents in his novels, and may put upon the screen one or two well-known ones which are still in existence, and which show the type denoting the starting-point in this Paper. The first example is the "King's Head" at Chigwell, celebrated by Dickens as the "Maypole" in *Barnaby Rudge*. The next the old "Tabard Inn" in Southwark. In the latter instance you will note the balcony round the coaching yard. This reminds one of the time, I think during Elizabeth's reign, when the comedians who then first united themselves into companies made use of these yards for entertainments, and erected an occasional stage at the fourth side, with its back to the gateway of the inn, at which admission money was taken. Hence in most of the theatres in the time of Shakespeare there was an open yard or area where people stood to see the exhibition, and to this the poet alludes in Hamlet's advice to the players when he bids them "not to tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the 'Groundlings.'"

The "Maid's Head" at Norwich is indeed typical of an ancient hostelry, having the quaint attributes which one associates with the old coaching days. The post yard has now been covered in with a glass roof, and forms a lounge such as we find in a grandiose style in modern hotels.

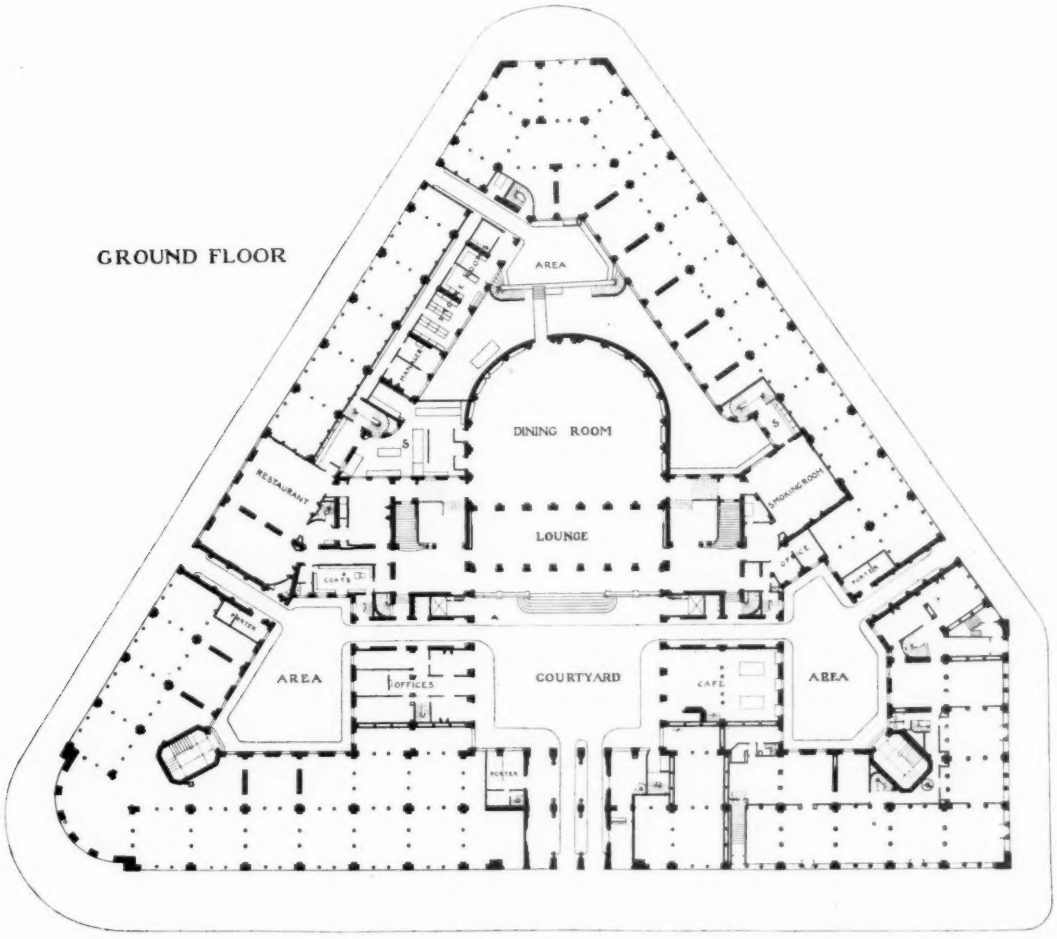
The next is the "Maid's Head" coffee-room. It was long the practice in even high-class houses to provide no public rooms. The coffee-room was compelled to serve all purposes: it was drawing, writing, and reading room all in one, the obvious aim in this being to encourage the hire of private sitting-rooms—an obligation that now no longer exists. It is not, however, so many years ago since better-class travellers clung to the tradition of "a private sitting-room," and scorned the idea of joining at *table d'hôte*. But this is altered now, and the public reception-rooms at hotels are freely used by guests. To speak of these inns is like entering upon an historical catalogue; the associations connected with them carry one away into so many directions, and land one into many strange corners of history.

There is no doubt that in the near future motorists will form a very important part of the public, so far at least as hotels are concerned, and they will probably bring back to the inns on our rural high roads much of the custom and the prestige which they lost through the disappearance of the stage coach. Many inns which have in the past been extensively used for coaching and posting purposes have more than sufficient stall accommodation for their present requirements, and it should be a simple matter to convert the stalls into garages to meet the increasing demand for such accommodation.

The inn sign-boards of olden days bespeak our interest for a while, as many of them owe their origin to the inspiration or generosity of men destined ultimately to win fame, and even fortune, in the noble pursuit of art. Signs are the survivals of the early days of public catering, and have a history that is interesting and often peculiarly fascinating. Signs were known before language, and pictorial sign-boards before printed names, and it may be safely concluded that the origin of trade signs was the natural desire of tradesmen to make it easy for the passer-by to find the shop selling the particular wares desired. Pictorial signs seem to have originated in Rome, where a bush was the indication that the house displaying it sold wine; hence the proverb, "Good wine needs no bush." The names on some inns often show an amusingly incongruous combination. Perhaps the majority of signs really have their

origin in the coats-of-arms, so that to trace their history back to the beginning would be to give a history of heraldry, which would be beyond the limits of this Paper. Another source is to be found in the devices of trade guilds, or merely of trades, as the "Bricklayers' Arms"; others are derived from legends of saints, such as the "George and Dragon."

It is more interesting, however, to trace the development of the signs to accidental corruption of words or to amusing misreadings of drawings by inexpert artists, such as the "Ramping Cat" for the "Lion Rampant." Then consider the "Pig and Whistle" which may be taken as the most quoted type of incongruous inn signs. There was a law made by King Edgar that when drinking from wooden bowls (wassail bowls), in use in ancient Saxon times, his subjects should always leave enough liquor at the bottom of the bowl to cover the peg there. Hence "peg and wassail," which has become corrupted into "pig and whistle." There are numerous others, but time does not permit me to mention them.

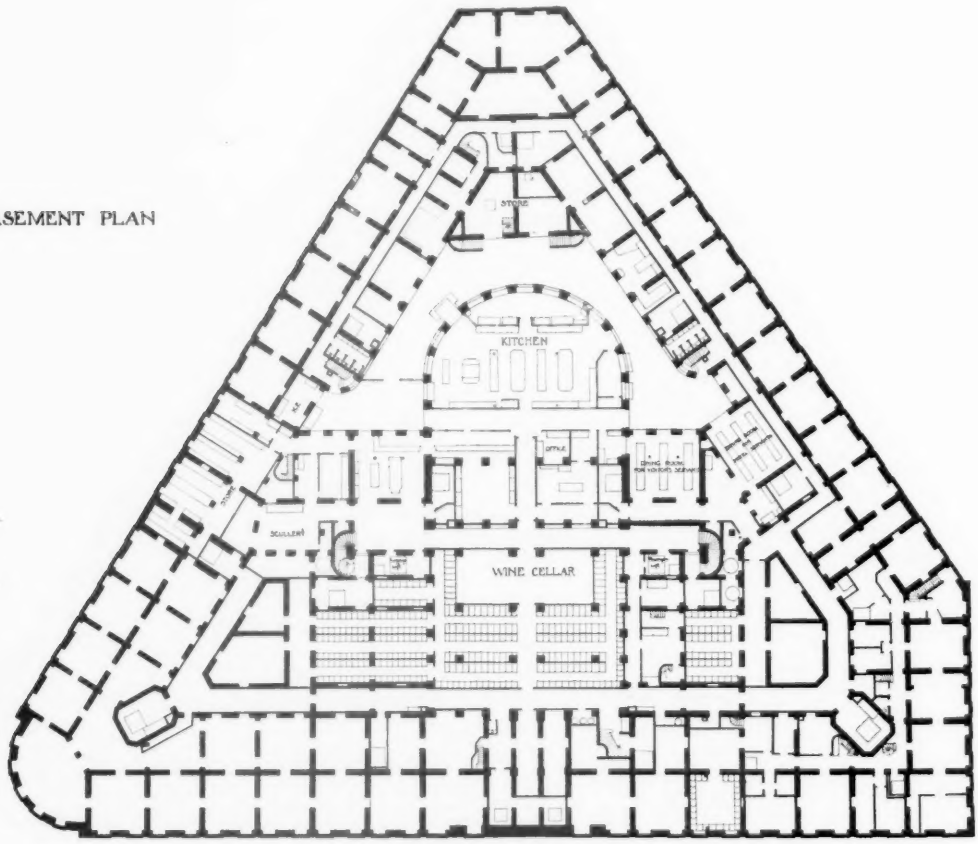


GRAND HÔTEL, PARIS. (M. ARMAND, ARCHITECT.)

An American writer has given the following vivid though hardly flattering picture of an inn bedroom:—"With the aid of two candles which I lighted I discovered the grate in the wall near the head of the bed, and on examining it closely I perceived that there was a fire in it. The grate could have held quite a double handful of coal if carefully put in; the fire, which seemed to be flickering so feebly, had yet energy to draw all the warmth of the chamber up the chimney, and I stood shivering in the temperature of a subterranean dungeon. The place instantly gave evidence of being haunted, and the testimony of my nerves on this point was corroborated by the spectral play of firelight on the ceiling when I blew out my candle. In the middle of the night I woke to the sense of something creeping with a rustling noise over the floor. I rejected the hypothesis of my bed curtain falling into place, though I remembered pulling it back that I might have light to read myself drowsy. I knew at once that it was a ghost walking in the night, and walking hard. Suddenly it ceased, and I knew why—it had been frozen out!"

There is a passage in one of Dr. Johnson's works in which he says that one of the characteristics of an inn was that you were made welcome, and that the more noise you made, and the more trouble you gave, and the more good things you called for, the more welcome you

BASEMENT PLAN

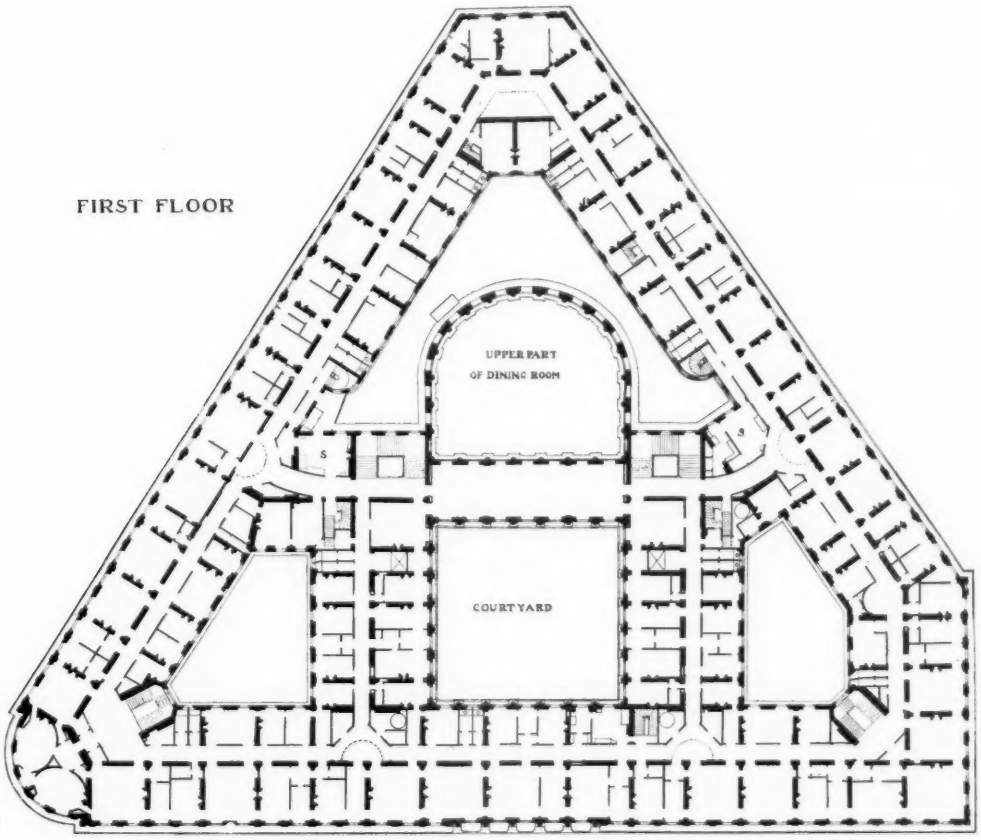


GRAND HOTEL, PARIS. (M. ARMAND, ARCHITECT.)

were. Having made that statement, Dr. Johnson proceeded to repeat with great emotion Shenstone's well-known verses :—

"Whoe'er has travelled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think how oft he found
The warmest welcome—at an inn."

Hotels have developed so enormously in recent years that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that one half of the world keeps them for the other half to live in. Hotel companies increase and multiply. They were a few years ago a popular form for the investment of capital. The average person spends, as a rule, a portion of every year in an hotel. Business, or pleasure-seeking—which is to many a very serious business—takes people so constantly from home that the hotel forms an integral part of their lives. We have not yet come, perhaps, to that system of more or less permanent residence in hotels which exists beyond the Atlantic, where whole families have no other home than the palatial hotel or the plebeian boarding-house. Still, the practice is not unknown even in this country, and it is growing with the increasing difficulties of housekeeping.



GRAND HÔTEL, PARIS. (M. ARMAND, ARCHITECT.)

It is not surprising, then, that modern hotels have multiplied exceedingly, and that some have almost reached the last limit in size and grandeur. Huge hostelries, embodying every method and device that may be supposed to minister to the demands of congregate existence, have sprung up in all centres of population. That tendency to bigness which is so characteristic of the present age has long since embraced hotels. The modern "monster" hotel is generally thought to be an American product, but the earliest specimens of it were long since devised by that nation of hotelkeepers the Swiss. Still, it has found its greatest development in the United States, whence it has now been imported into this country. These enormous edifices require to be planned with the most minute and anxious care; every detail has to be thought out so as to give the maximum of convenience and appliance. Upon consideration it will be readily conceived that, as far as accommodation is concerned, the great improvements have been made in recent years. There is no room in the town for the "pokey little hotel." Hygiene and sanitary teachings have helped in the radical change, and now the average traveller expects an abundance of light and air, comfortable surroundings, good attendance, and a faultless *cuisine*. It is the withering of the individual and the suppression of personal relations which makes the big hotel, with all its amenities of accommodation, so distasteful to some people. It is unpleasant, they say, to live as in a crowd; but I fear it is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid it nowadays.

The railway termini hotels can claim to have exercised in an indirect manner considerable influence in raising the standard of hotel accommodation, most of them being palatial in their proportions. Perhaps the principal of these hotels, and one which needs some comment, is the Midland St. Pancras Hotel, which was designed by the late Sir Gilbert Scott. Other hotels of the early Victorian era are the Great Western, Charing Cross, and Cannon Street, all of which are still in existence, although no doubt remodelled and brought up to date.

One may say that hotels are of three classes—viz., residential hotels, commercial hotels, railway hotels. The "residential" hotel is practically a modern institution, and is, as the name implies, a house of residence for visitors who can stay for more or less lengthened periods.

The commercial hotel is similar in most respects, but the commercial room is given the most prominence, and should be made the most comfortable. Care must be taken to provide separate tables for correspondence, so as to ensure privacy, which is most desirable and essential. A reference library, with a sufficient supply of directories, railway guides, literature bearing upon business topics, is desirable. Lifts should be provided for carrying packages to all floors, and a well-lighted sample-room should be arranged for. There should be a feeling of comfort in the apartments, but lavish, expensive fittings and appointments would be quite out of place.

The railway hotel caters for the travelling public, and passengers arriving at unreasonable times of the night and early morning greatly appreciate the avoidance of expensive cab fares, &c. They have only to walk from the platform into the hotel, their luggage being brought in without much expense by the hotel or railway porters.

The location of an hotel is all-important, whether destined for a "commercial hotel" or a "residential hotel." Unfortunately this is often settled before the architect is consulted, and he has to make the best of a bad position. The hotel should have the best and most suitable position according to the *clientèle* for whom it is intended to cater. A commercial hotel should be located in the centre of commercial life, and a residential hotel in a large city in the midst of theatres, clubs, and the whole fashionable life, and it should be situated in a main thoroughfare. Of course this does not apply to hotels in health resorts, where the more isolated they are, or if they have the advantage of being built on the side of a hill, the greater are the chances of success.

The building itself should present a pleasing exterior. I do not, however, purpose here to deal with design, but would like to say that in hotels the usual tawdry and showy character should be avoided, and the building should be designed with a simple architectural treatment. There should be an inviting main entrance, and the building should be well lighted. A bright, cheerful appearance has great attractions. The rooms should be light, but not too large; furniture substantial and not flimsy, to stand wear and tear.

There should, if possible, be only one entrance and exit for the staff. The success of an undertaking is sometimes marred by the loss which often occurs when this is forgotten. Another very important feature is that the building should, as far as possible, be fireproof, and should have one or more fire-escape staircases arranged with escape-door at each corridor.

It is often surprising that a better entrance to the dining-rooms is not provided in many hotels. I have seen some fairly large hotels where the dining-room is approached by a long narrow passage from the reception-hall, and the room itself entered through a narrow door. Folding doors should, I think, always be provided.

The cloakroom arrangements also are often inadequate, and a total absence of system seems to prevail in this department with disastrous results.

It is very important that an hotel should be so planned as to minimise the staff as far as possible. I have heard it said of a very large hotel in this country that to work it satisfactorily a staff of 150 servants is necessary, with the result that in winter there would be three servants to each guest.

The usual accommodation of the modern hotel now might be stated as follows:—

Ground Floor:

Lounge or winter garden.
Dining-rooms, restaurant, coffee-room, with services adjoining.
Reading and writing room.
Small drawing-room.
Smoking and billiard room, with bar attached.
Ballroom, with reception-room attached.
Office and manager's room.
Gentlemen's lavatory and cloakroom.
Ladies' retiring and toilet rooms.

Basement:

Kitchen and offices.
Staff dining-rooms.
Servants' hall.

In addition, often one or two rooms are required as private dining-rooms, and in the provinces a large hall for public banquets and meetings is necessary, in which case a separate service should be arranged with a separate kitchen.

In large hotels a barber's shop is often found to be a useful adjunct. I venture to suggest that, where the business is large and the premises will admit of it, a bakery should be provided. The consequent saving is considerable, and, as a rule, the articles produced far superior to those obtained from outside sources.

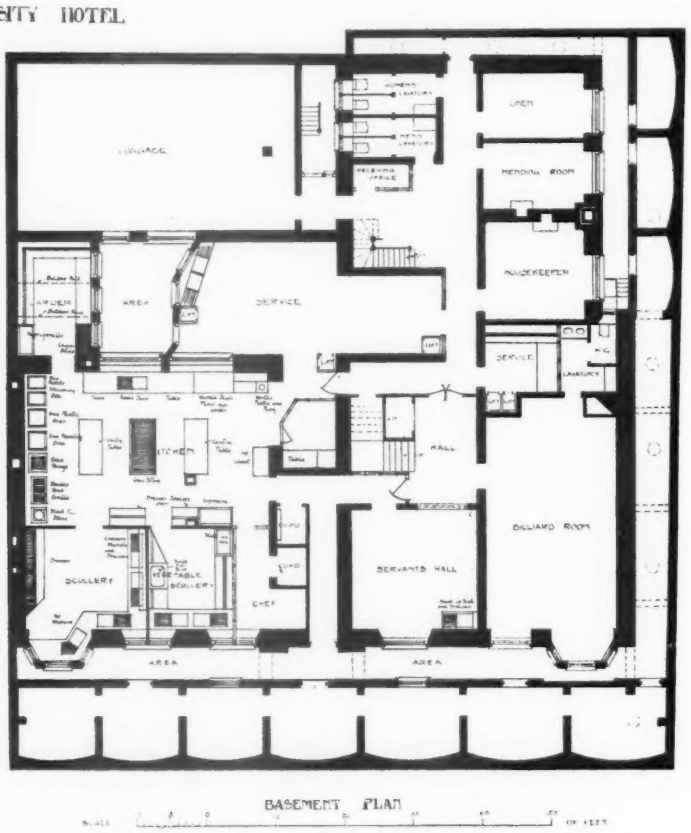
In commercial hotels a sample-room is required with office, lift, and separate entrance.

A café is sometimes thought desirable, as at the Savoy Hotel; but this is more a feature in Continental hotels.

In Eastern hotels a bazaar should be arranged, and a verandah, on each floor, affording shelter from the sun's rays and supplying a comfortable lounge, as may be seen in the hotel at Mombasa.

The upper floors are usually devoted to sitting-rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms and w.c.'s, and service-rooms, of which there should be one on each floor fitted with sinks, hot plates, &c., in direct communication with the kitchen, and adjoining which the service lifts to carry coals, &c., should be arranged.

As far as possible the ladies' and gentlemen's lavatories should be away from each other, and cut off from the main corridor by a ventilated lobby. Lavatory accommodation for both



UNIVERSITY HOTEL, LONDON. (MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)

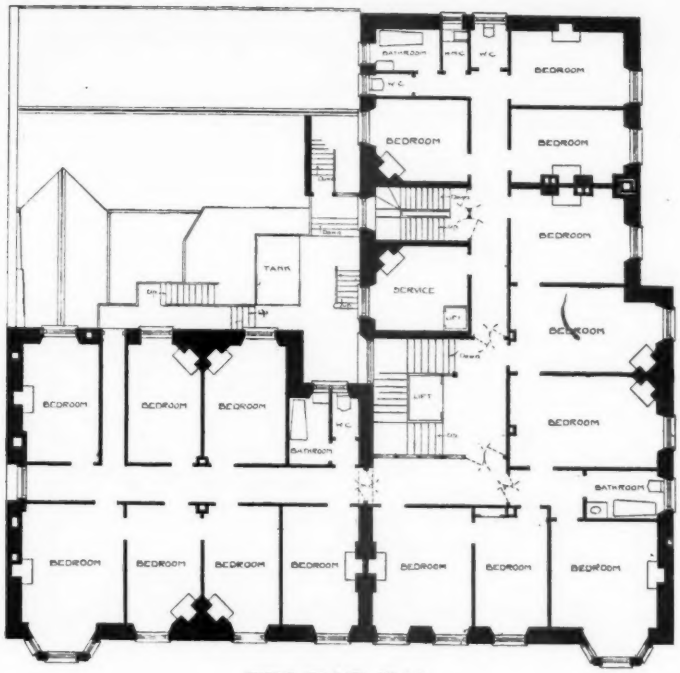
sexes should be provided near the entrance hall, and should be well separated, and not too much in evidence.

The office need not be a large department, but should be near the main entrance, and should include reception office, inquiry, letters and keys, cashier's office.

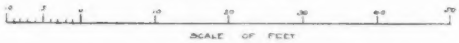
There should be a bills office, where accounts are made out, in direct communication with the cashier's office either by lift or pneumatic tube.

There should be a porters' room, and perhaps a cigar counter near the entrance.

The main entrance should be so arranged where possible that visitors arriving shall not



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GORDON STREET

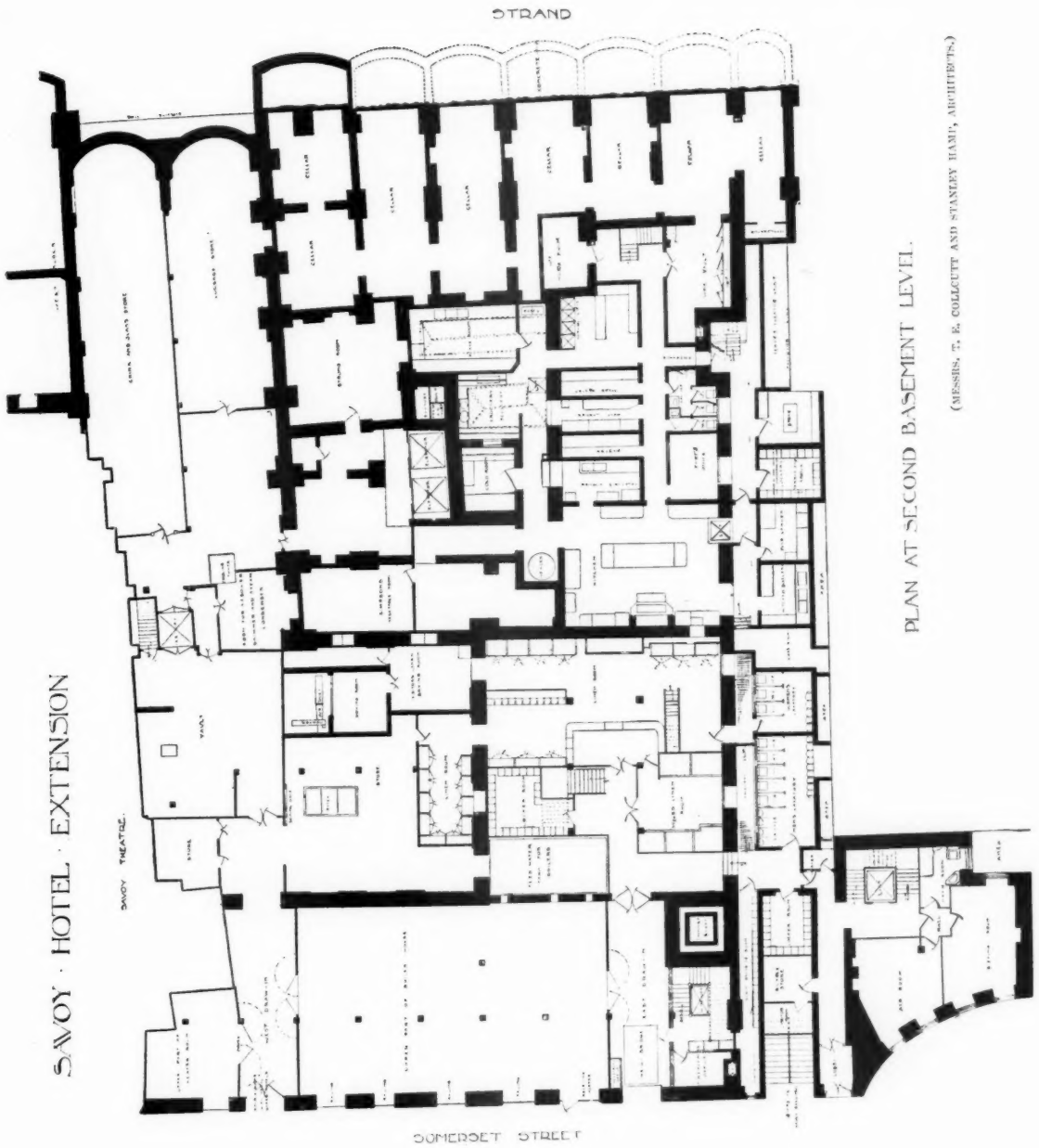
GROUND PLAN

ENDSLEIGH GARDENS

3'F

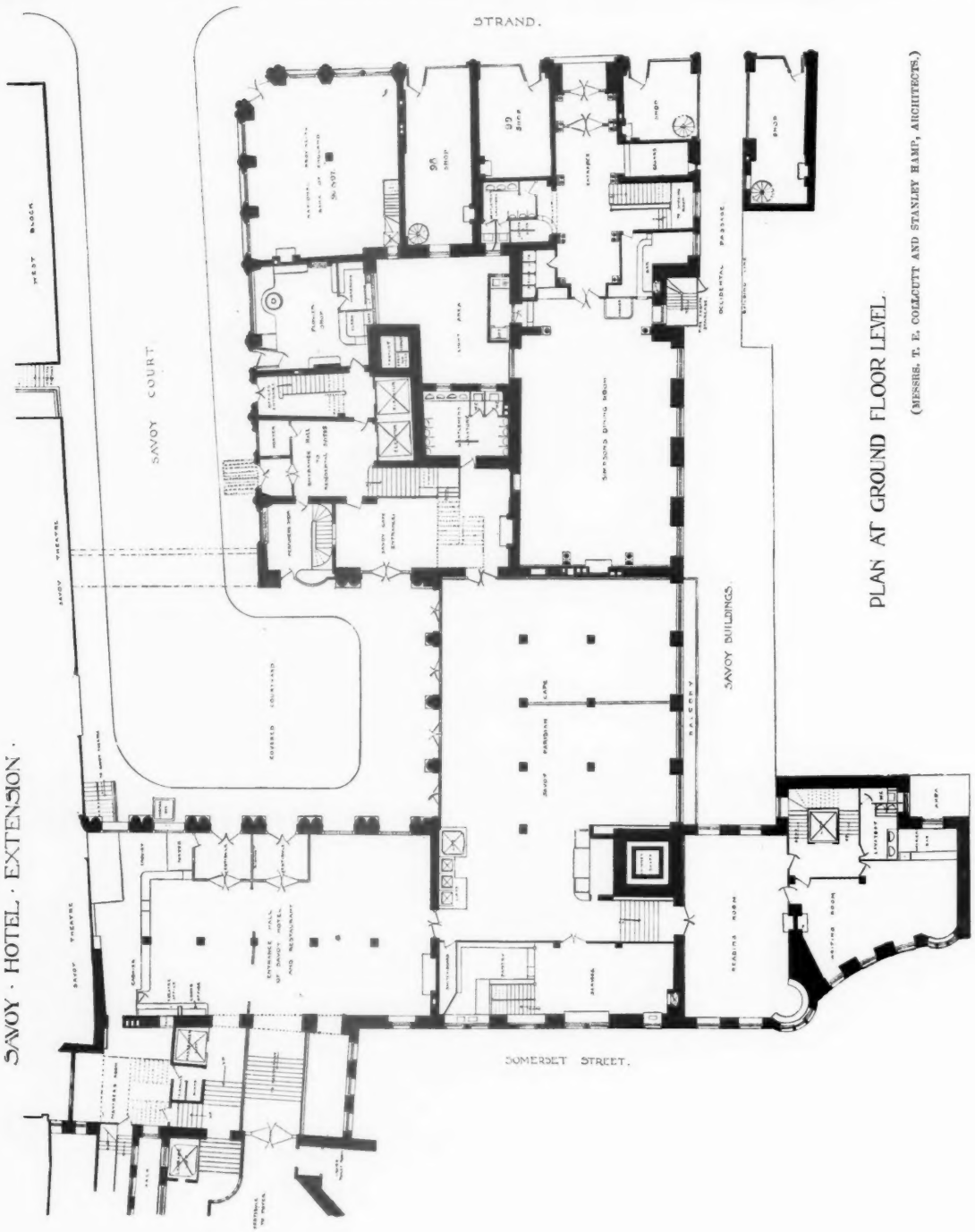
UNIVERSITY HOTEL, LONDON. (MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)


STRAND
SAVOY · HOTEL · EXTENSION ·
(MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)
PLAN AT FIRST BASEMENT LEVEL
SAVOY THEATRE
SAVOY BUILDINGS
SOMERSET STREET

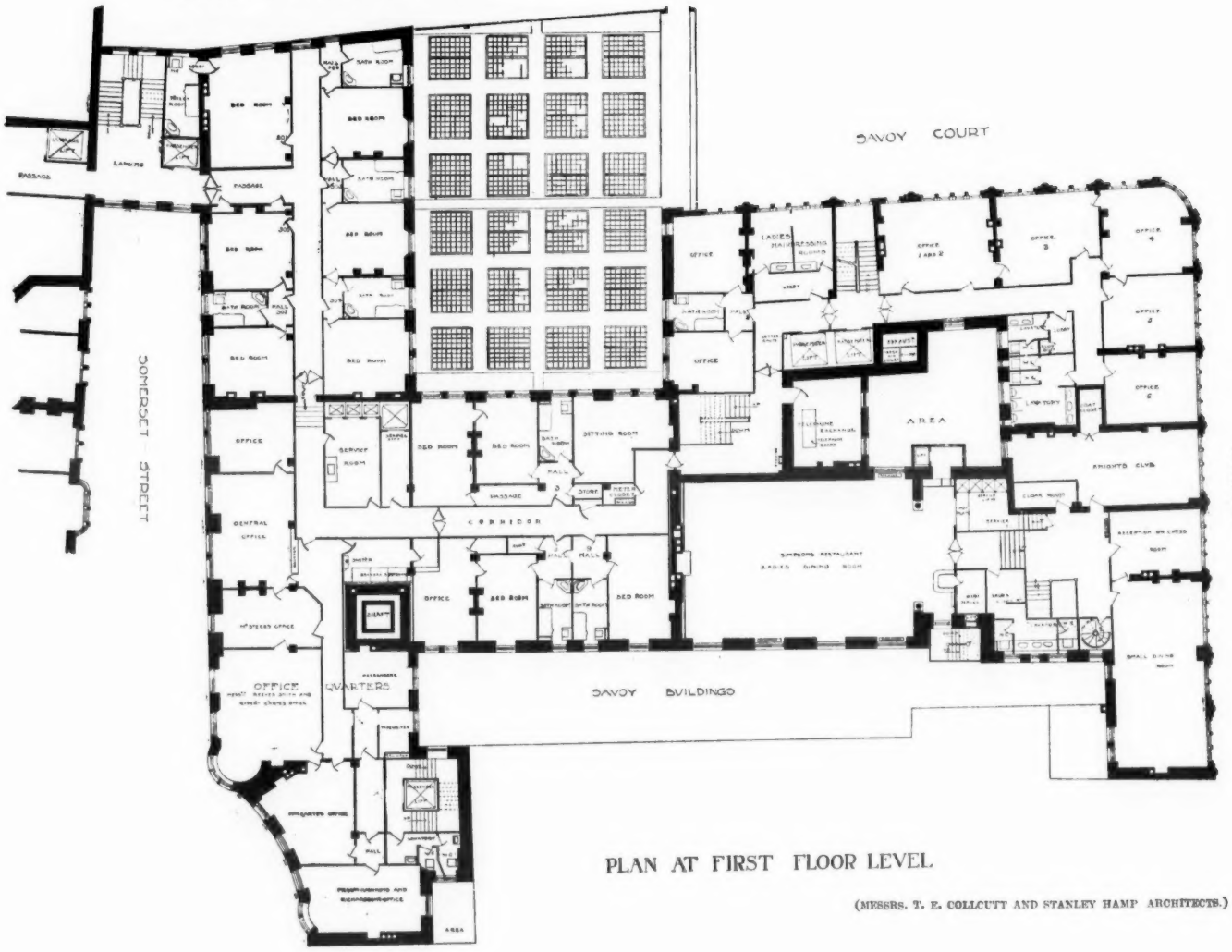


PLAN AT SECOND BASEMENT LEVEL

(MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)

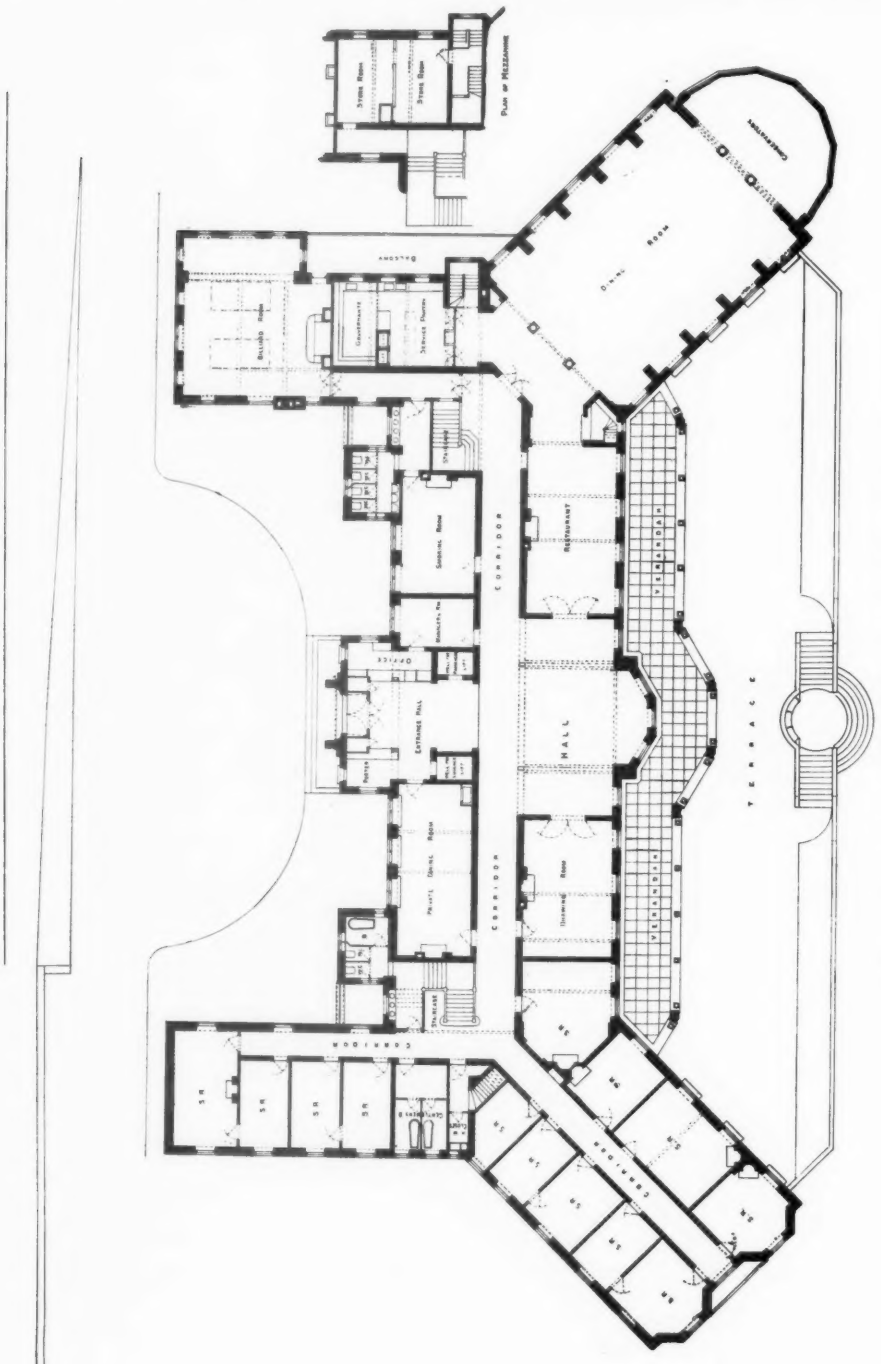

STRAND.
SAVOY COURT
SAVOY BUILDINGS
SOMERSET STREET.
SAVOY · HOTEL · EXTENSION ·
PLAN AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL.
(MESSRS. T. E. COLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)

SAVOY · HOTEL · EXTENSION

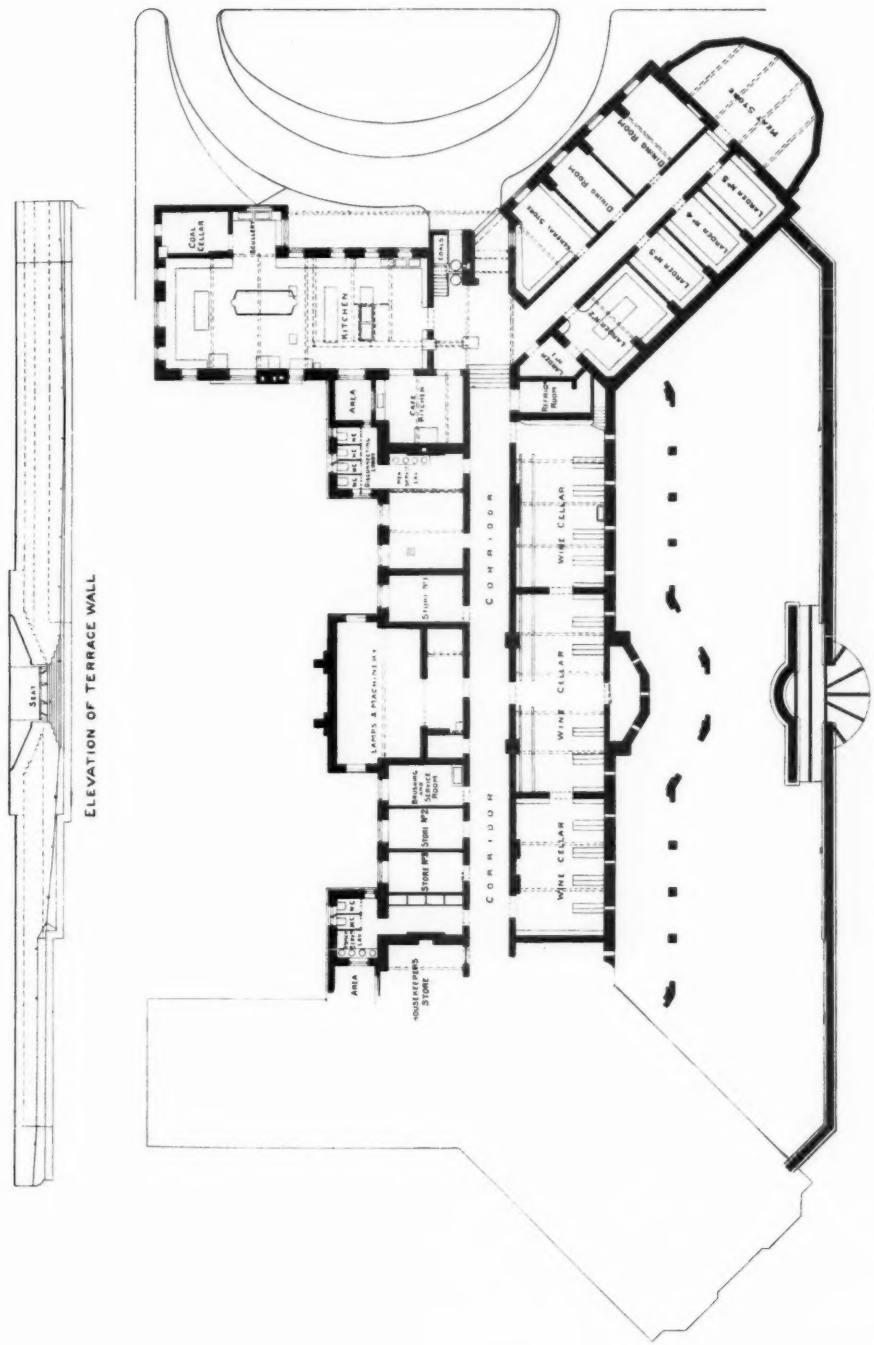


PLAN AT FIRST FLOOR LEVEL

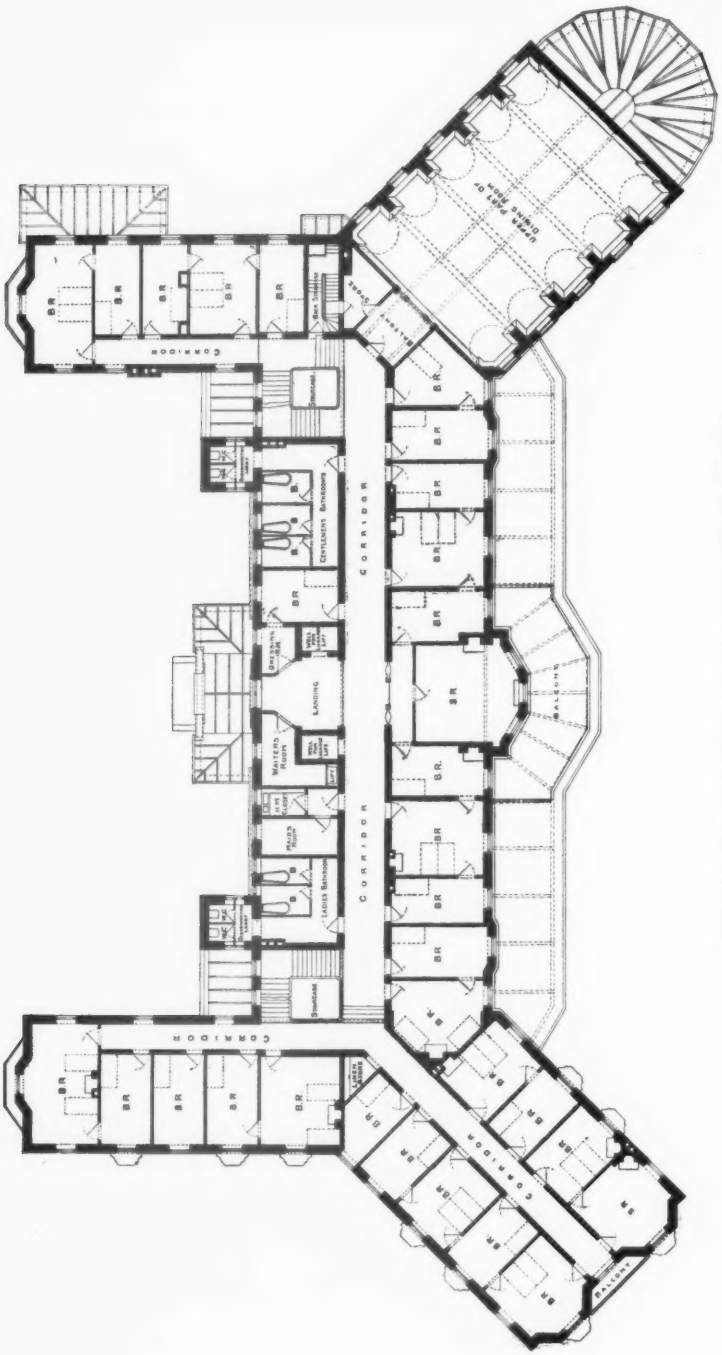
(MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP ARCHITECTS.)



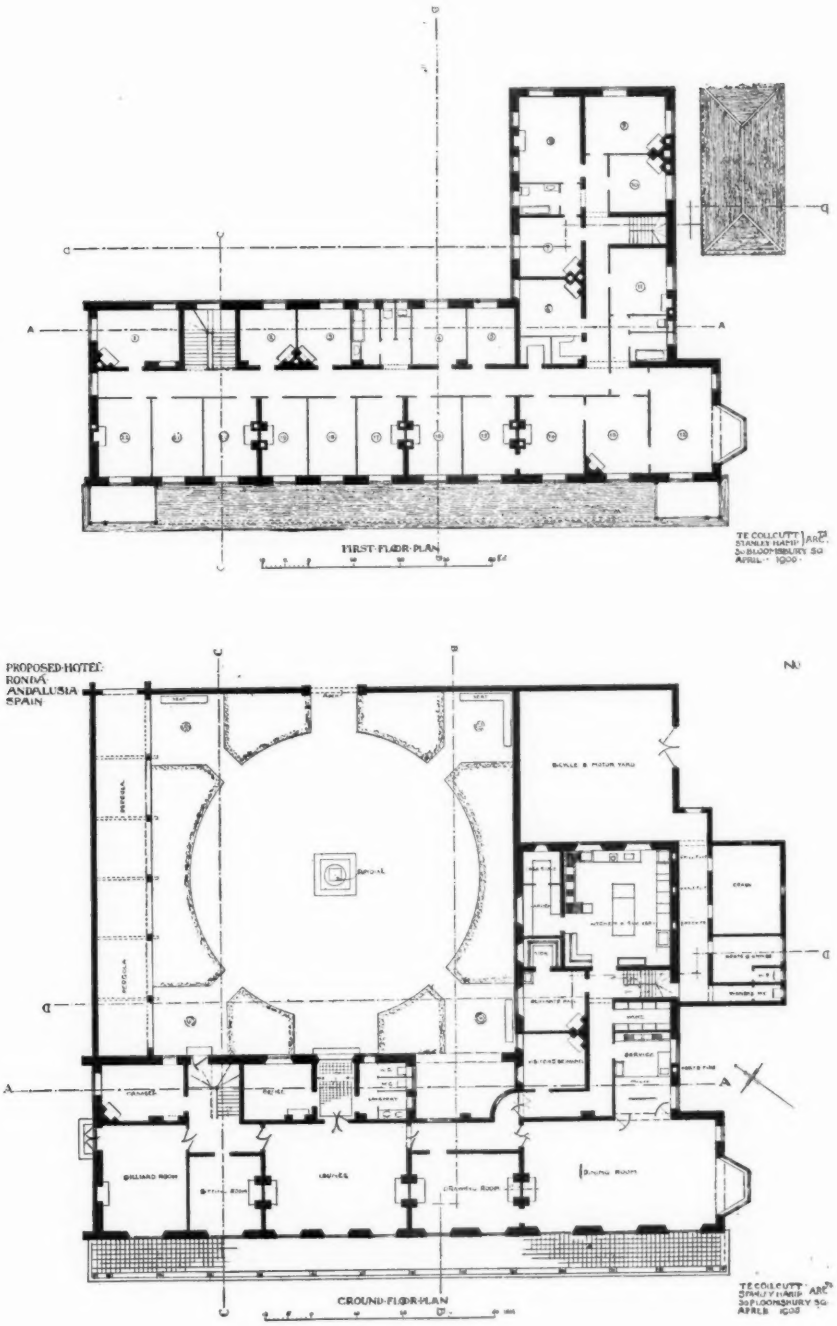
HOTEL, CAPE TOWN: GROUND FLOOR. (MESSRS. DUNN AND WATSON, ARCHITECTS.)



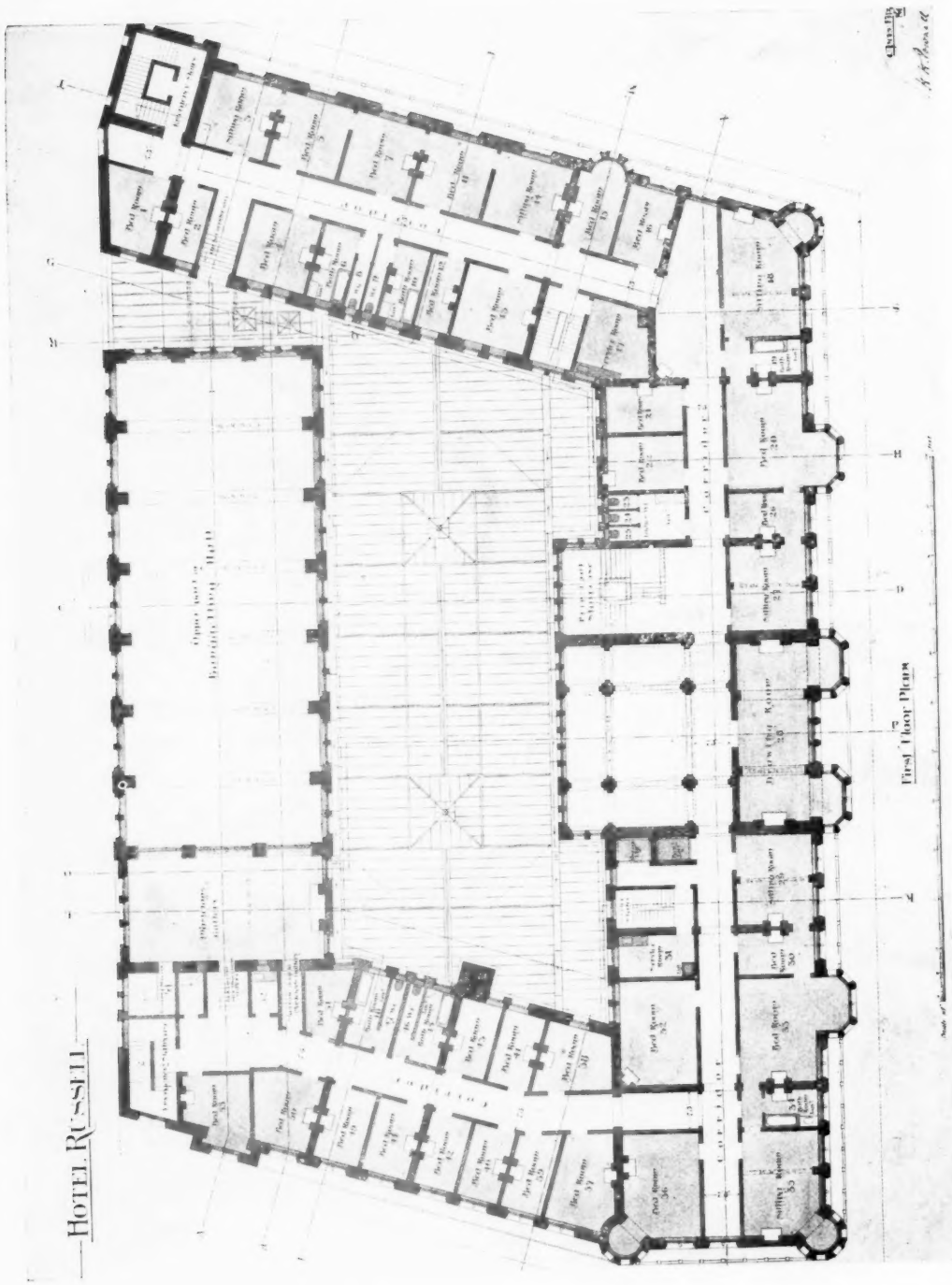
HOTEL, CAPE TOWN: BASEMENT FLOOR. (MESSRS. BUSS AND WATSON, ARCHITECTS.)



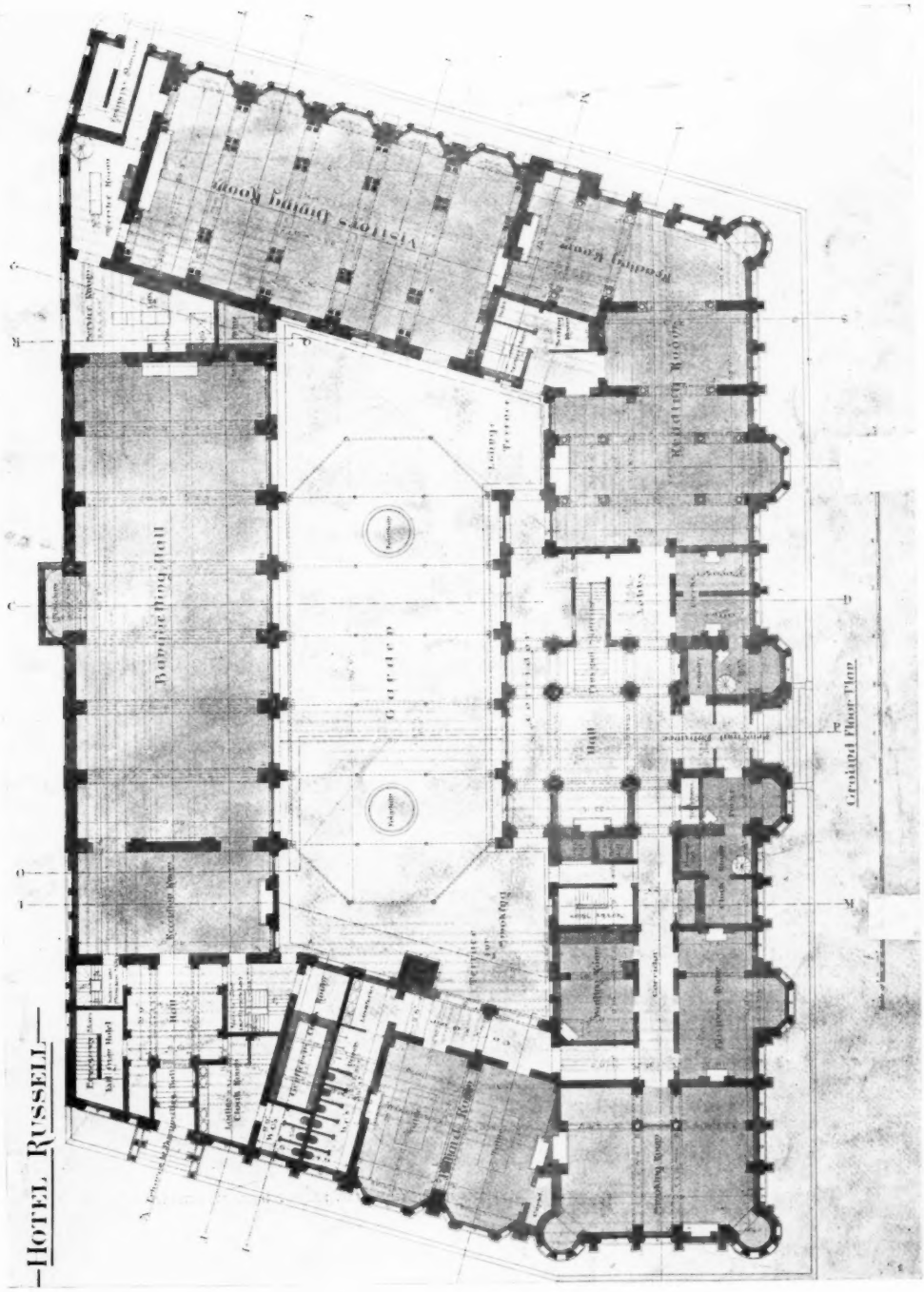
HOTEL, CAPE TOWN: FIRST FLOOR. (MESSRS. DUNN AND WATSON, ARCHITECTS.)



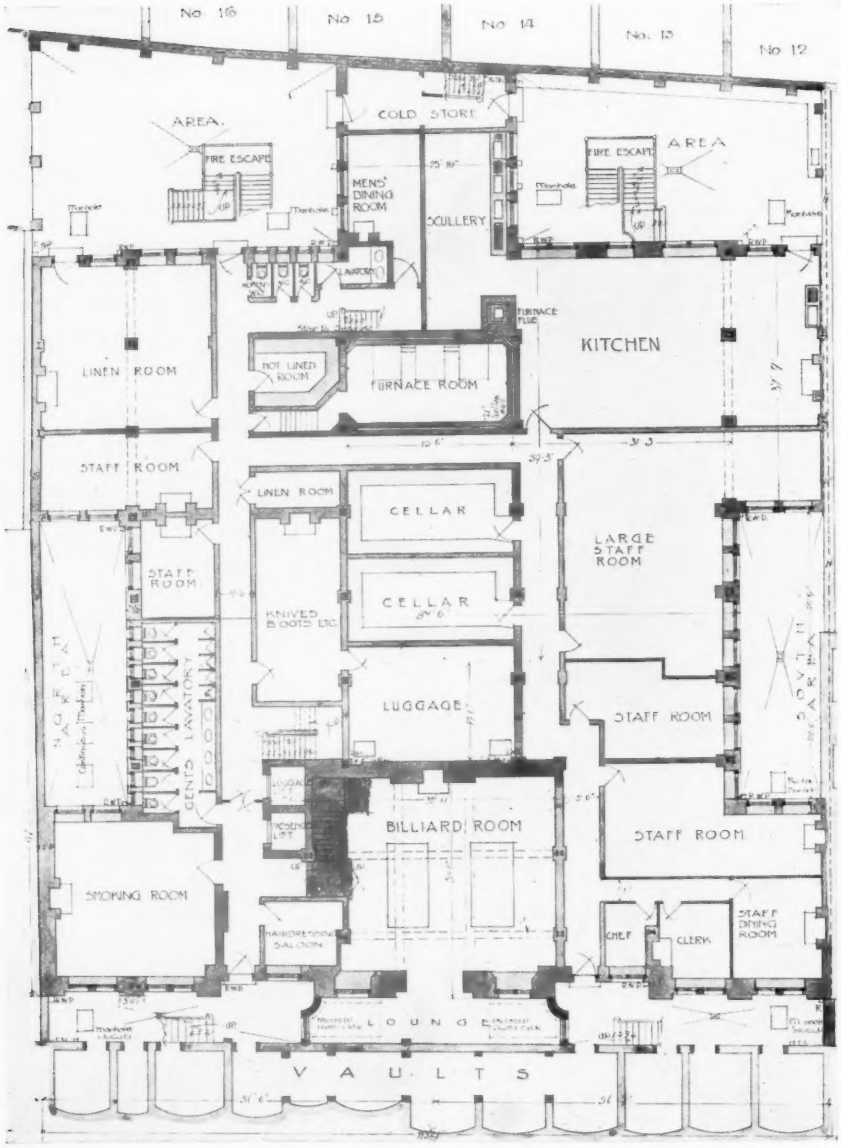
HOTEL, RONDA, ANDALUSIA, SPAIN.



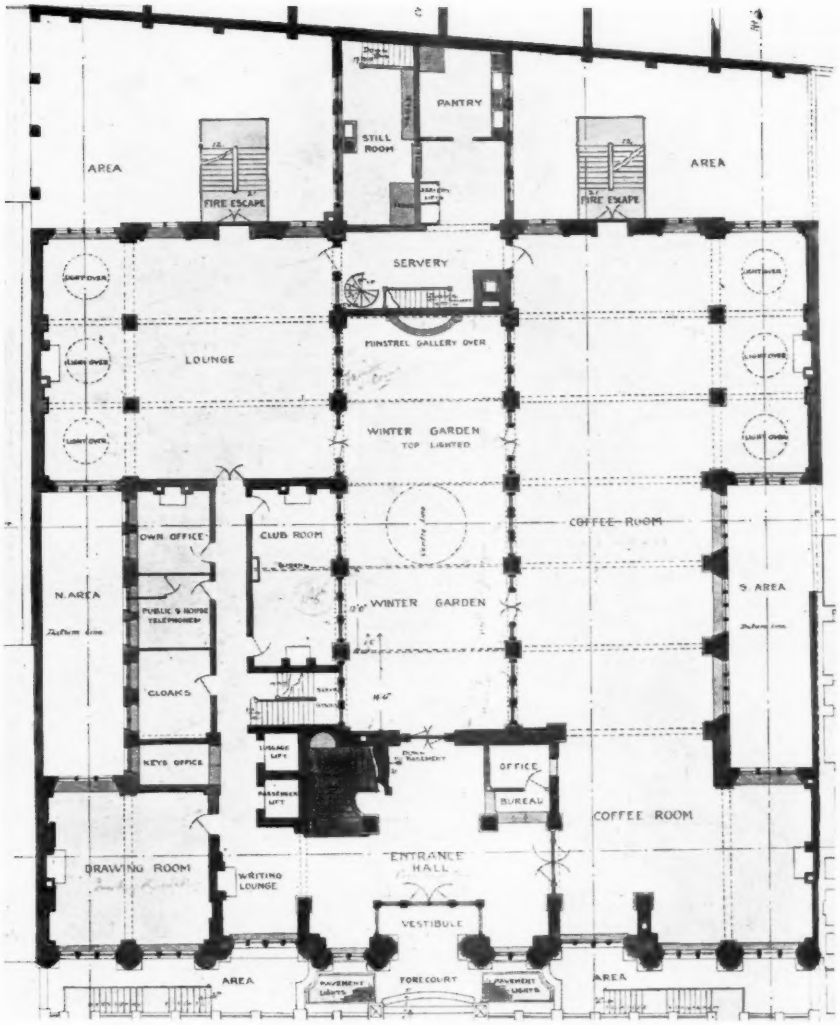
HÔTEL RUSSELL SQUARE: FIRST-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. CHAS. FITZROY DOLL, ARCHITECT.)



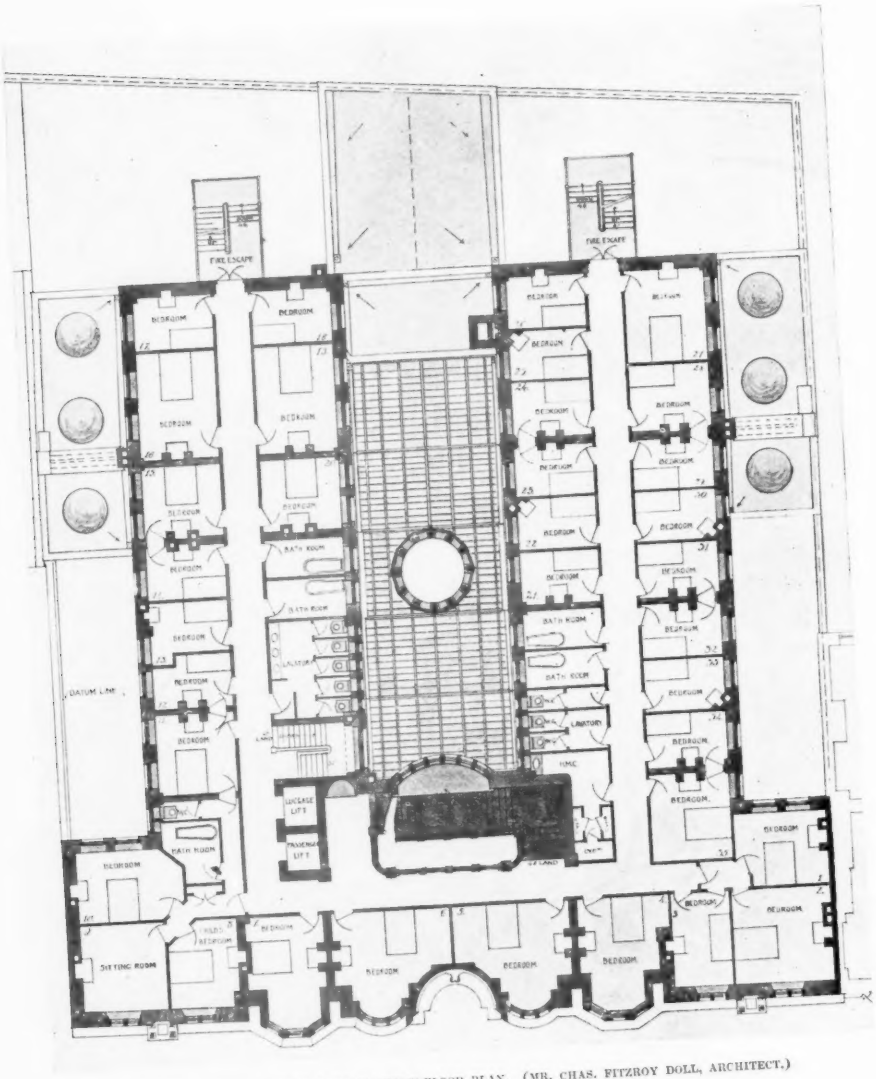
HOTEL RUSSELL, RUSSELL SQUARE: GROUND-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. CHAS. FITZROY DOLL, ARCHITECT.)



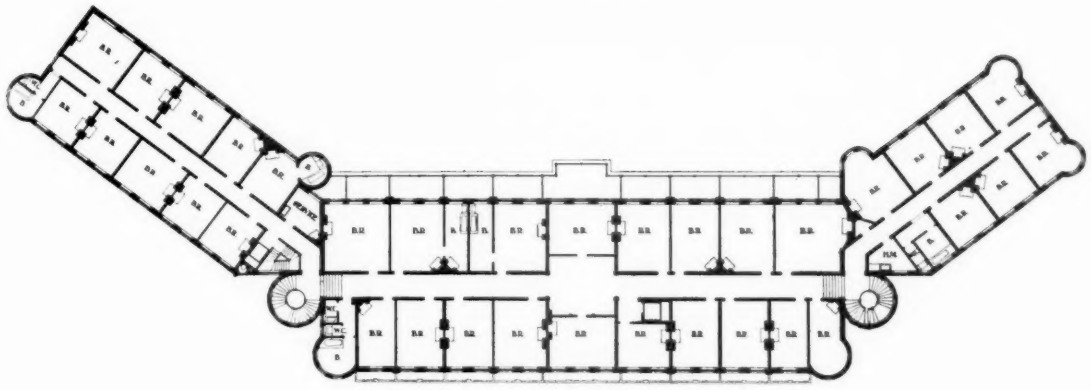
IMPERIAL HOTEL RUSSELL SQUARE: BASEMENT PLAN. (MR. CHAS. FITZROY DOLL ARCHITECT.)



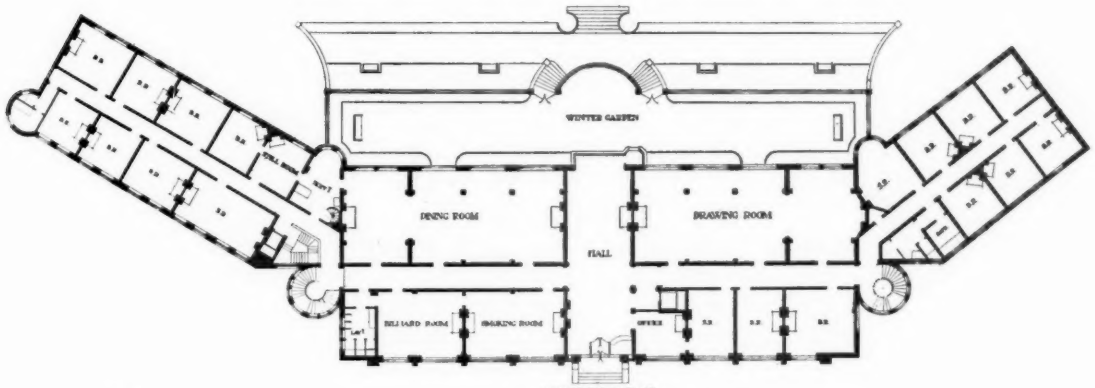
IMPERIAL HOTEL RUSSELL SQUARE: GROUND-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. CHAS. FITZROY DOLL, ARCHITECT.)



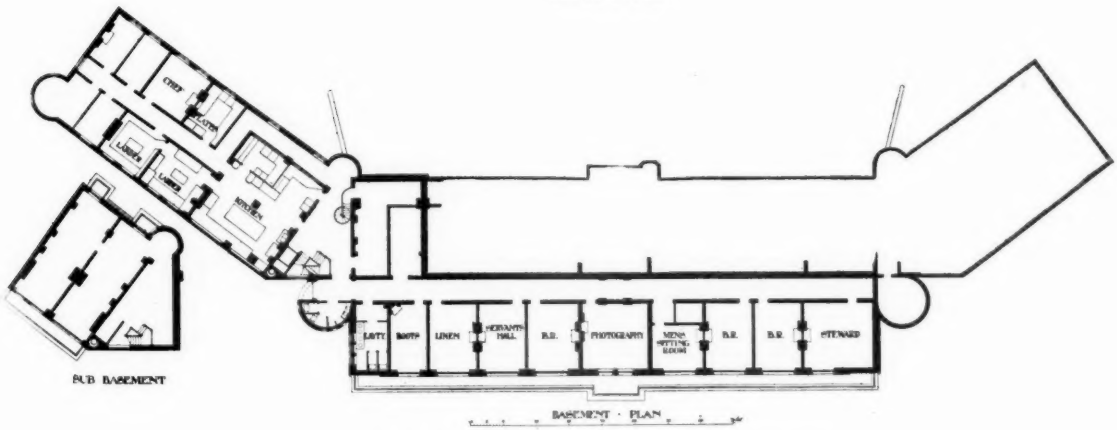
IMPERIAL HOTEL, RUSSELL SQUARE: FIRST-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. CHAS. FITZROY DOLL, ARCHITECT.)



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



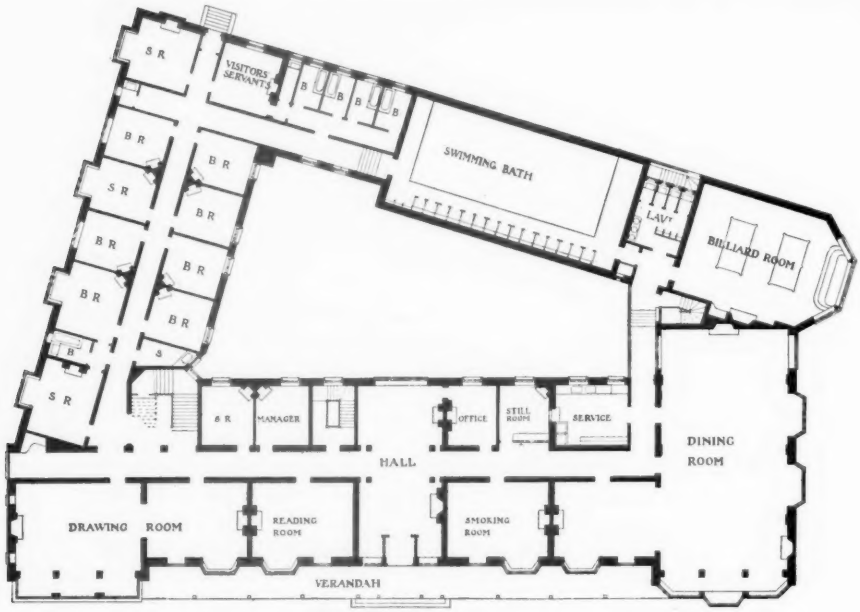
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



SUB BASEMENT

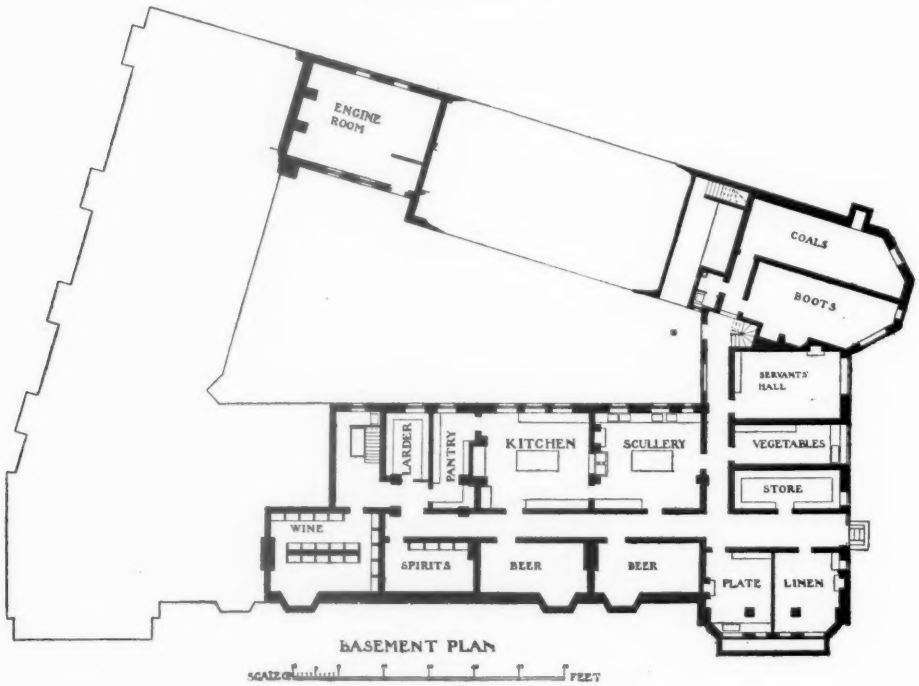
BASEMENT · PLAN

BURLINGTON HOTEL, BOSCOMBE. (MR. T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT.)



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE OF FEET



BASEMENT PLAN

SCALE OF FEET

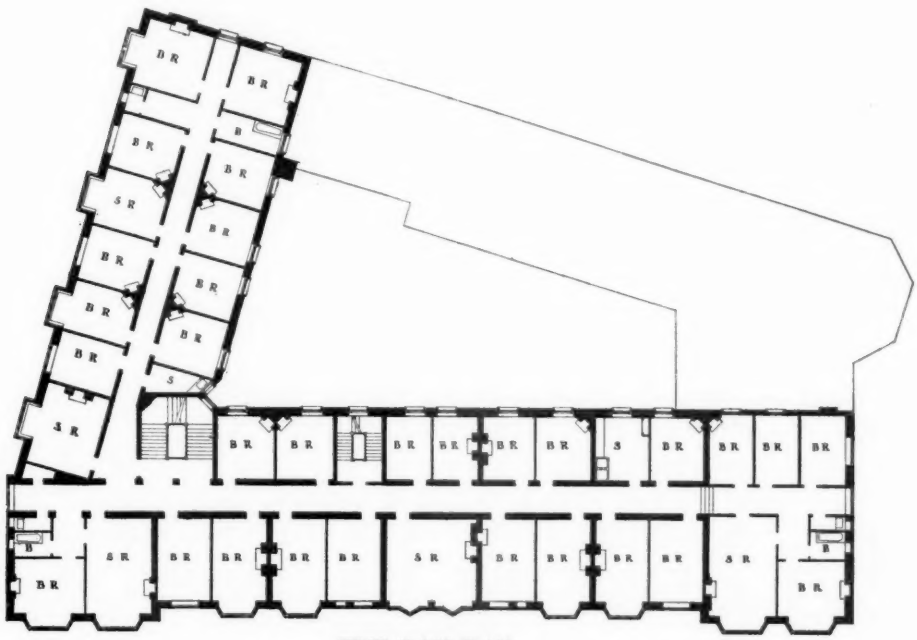
GRAND HOTEL, JERSEY. (MR. T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT.)

be compelled to pass through the lounge in their travelling cloaks to gain access to their rooms, and so that the luggage can be handled without any inconvenience to visitors.

Both the passenger and luggage lifts should be near the entrance.

The dining-room, especially in large towns, should be provided with an orchestra ; and where a ballroom is impossible the dining-room should have a dancing floor.

The feature shown in the Algeciras Hotel of the square bays leading out from the dining-room is much appreciated. They are 11 feet square, and are used largely for small dinner parties. The patio also shown there is a pleasing feature, and one largely used in Spain. Sometimes it is entirely roofed over, in which case the bedrooms open direct on to the balcony around.



GRAND HOTEL, JERSEY. (MR. T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT.)

Some of the rooms on the upper floors in all hotels should be arranged in suites, with sitting-room, one or more bedrooms with communicating doors, and small hall. Fixed wardrobes can often be provided with such an arrangement.

Communicating doors between rooms are advisable, to enable them to be let *en suite*, and should be double ; in some instances it has been found also necessary to arrange for a removable asbestos deafening pad to be fixed between them.

All sash windows should be made reversible, so that they may be cleaned from the inside. Double windows should be fixed to all windows facing main thoroughfares.

Heating coils should be placed in all public rooms, staircases, corridors, and landings ; thermostats for automatically controlling the temperature are largely used in the United States.

Fire hydrants and fire alarms should be provided in all public corridors.

One might sum up the essential features in planning an hotel as follows :—

1. The maximum amount of light and air.
2. A simple and direct plan.
3. A proper distribution of the working and managerial parts of the hotel, and easy and direct service communication to the public and private rooms.
4. Centralisation of kitchen and offices.
5. Perfect sanitation.
6. Adequate means of escape in case of fire and panic.

The lounge is quite a modern introduction in England. That it lent an added attraction to the modern hotel was quickly recognised, and nowadays no architect of a first-class house would think of leaving it out of account in his plans. It is, moreover, almost the universal rule for hotels making enlargements and improvements to introduce the lounge as a new feature, and what was once an innovation has now come to be regarded as a necessity by visitors. The comfortable and luxuriously approached lounge is the popular place for afternoon tea, as well as for coffee and a cigar after dinner. This does not do away with the necessity of a smoking-room exclusively for men, or the drawing-room for ladies, although the latter room need not be of large dimensions, and can often be arranged on the first floor.

A favourite and successful method for the acquirement of bed and sitting rooms is to build them in suites with a lobby, which forms a small hall from which lead bedroom, sitting-room, and bathroom, and in addition a smaller bedroom may be planned adjoining with communicating doors, so that the suite may, if desired, be extended.

The bathroom, although it has now become an important feature, should not be made too large. It is remarkable how small a room will hold a bath, lavatory basin, and w.c. comfortably. You will observe in the Savoy Hotel plans, where new bathrooms have been arranged on the Embankment front, how the best use has been made of a small floor space available. It is becoming the fashion now for each bedroom to possess its own bathroom with lavatory and w.c., with a steam-heated towel-rail in addition. It is also becoming usual now to provide fixed wardrobes to bedrooms in place of movable pieces of furniture. There is a plan showing how this has been arranged at the Ritz Hotel.

Another feature of modern hotels is the attention that is being directed to the provision, not only of ordinary baths, but of Turkish, electric, and medical baths also. The comforts of an hotel are undoubtedly enhanced when, for example, the equipment includes special baths, such as Turkish baths, hot and cold sea-water baths, and electric baths, and a source of considerable attraction and value is thereby gained. English people are slowly but surely realising that treatment by means of baths for the relief of certain ailments, such as gout and rheumatism, may be just as efficiently conducted at home as abroad.

The construction and arrangements of lifts is another important matter. They should be near the office—that is to say, just by the entrance hall. If there is a large and constant flow of guests, as in some large American hotels, one lift is used for ascending only and another for descending only, and in some cases there are six or as many as ten elevators side by side, each capable of holding ten to fifteen persons. By the side of the lifts there is often a glass cage which is used for letters. If a guest on the twentieth floor wishes to send a letter to the post he puts it through the aperture in the glass and it falls to a letter-box in the entrance hall, which is emptied at the same time as the letter-boxes outside.

Service lifts from the kitchen department and still-rooms are required from the basement, delivering on all floors to ensure quick service to sitting-rooms and bedrooms; wine dispense lift to ground floor ; luggage lift from basement to top floor, delivering on each floor.

These may be run by hydraulic or electric power, the latter, I think, much preferable.

In speaking of the waiters' services for a large dining-room or restaurant where *à la carte* prices are obtained it is found to be more satisfactory to provide a wide stairway or sloping way to the kitchen in place of lifts, which must be planned so that the entrance and exit are entirely separated. The best arrangement undoubtedly is for the kitchen to be on the same floor and immediately adjoining the dining-room, but as a rule the ground floor is considered as valuable for this purpose.

Electric lighting is now in use in the majority of the larger London and provincial hotels, and of these not a few have their own generating plant. The exact point at which a private plant is more economical than a supply from the public mains depends most largely on the power required in each particular case. The reasons why in some instances it is more economical to create electric current than to buy it, is that an hotel must instal steam boilers for the supply of steam to the kitchens, still-rooms, radiators, and for the production of hot water, and that the steam required for these purposes is practically as efficient after it has worked an engine actuating a motor—that is to say, the exhaust steam from the engines will answer the purpose as well as direct steam.

The drawbacks to the production of energy are the vibration from the engines and greater heat in basements owing to increased consumption of coal.

Hotels, particularly when of a large size, require a considerable amount of engine power. There should always be a reserve generating unit as a provision against an emergency of any kind.

In the Hôtel Métropole, Chicago, until recent years they were supplied from a central power company, and the cost of illumination averaged £160 per month; and a steam plant also operated in the hotel to heat the building at a cost of £150 per month, and the elevators cost a further £40. A new electrical equipment was supplied by the Westinghouse Company. Two water-tube boilers of 225 horse-power each were installed, &c., which reduced the cost to almost half. The plant is designed to furnish light, heat, and power to all the various departments of the hotel. The greatest care should be taken in the placing of the machinery, or serious inconvenience will be caused by the noise and vibration travelling through the building. If this is not considered, disastrous results will follow. In any case a boiler of sufficient power and capacity is required for supplying reduced steam for cooking (with an auxiliary boiler as a stand-by); also for heating water for hot-water circulation throughout the building; for draw-off purposes for baths, lavatories, and sinks by means of calorifiers and tanks, with a separate or auxiliary supply for the kitchen department, so as to be independent of the general supply in case of necessity.

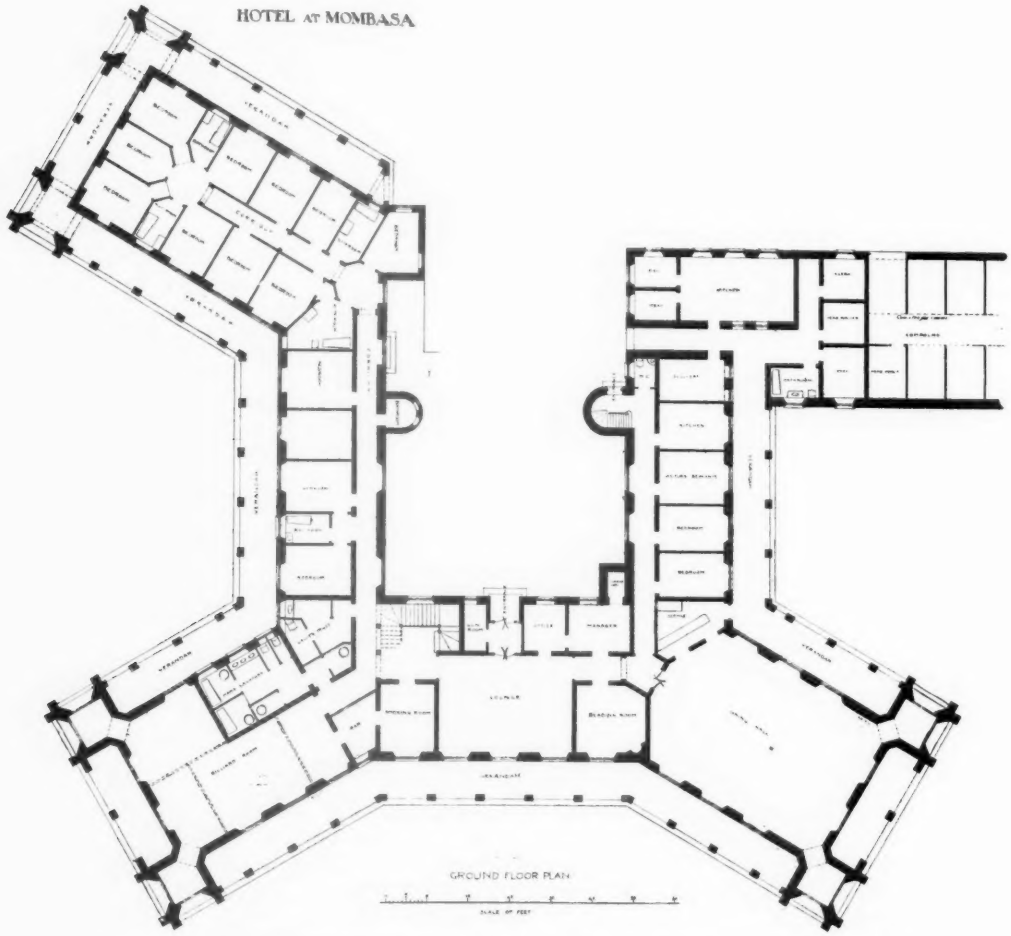
Linen store-rooms and linen mending-rooms with airing store-cupboards should be heated with steam or hot water. The linen-room on the upper or bedroom floors of hotels can be heated off the bath circulation, or, if near the service pantries, a branch from the small hot closet's steam supply is best. The steam boiler would also be large enough to supply steam for heating apparatus.

The importance of good ventilation in an hotel can hardly be over-estimated, and requires very careful consideration. I am told that the most perfect and recent system of ventilation is that in use at the Midland Hotel, Manchester. Here, by means of two fans revolving 180 times per minute, 2¼ million cubic feet per hour of fresh air, cool in summer and heated in winter, are introduced into the building. The air is filtered through a screen of special material, which has an area of 320 square feet exposed to the air inlet. This screen extracts all the soot and chemicals, clearing the air as it passes through, the largeness of the area of the screen making the resistance to the fans as little as possible. Besides the supply of fresh air, ventilation, of course, involves the extraction of the vitiated air, for mere dilution of

foul air is not good ventilation. The air extraction and ventilation of the guests' rooms should be absolutely separate from the other portions of the buildings, and special attention has to be given to the extraction of air and heat from the kitchens, laundries, and such places, especially if they are in the basement.

Two questions of great moment have to be considered with regard to the fire alarms in hotels: (1) Shall the alarm be a universal one? (2) Shall the alarm be given only to the officials and the staff?

The latter course, I think, is the correct one. If a universal alarm be given a serious panic might easily arise, whereas the action of a well-trained staff might avoid a serious outbreak in the event of actual danger. If we agree that this system is best, let us deal with it accordingly. In a suitable spot in each corridor on every floor of the hotel should be fitted a fire-alarm contact, preferably in a cast-iron case, and of the "break-the-glass" type, which is

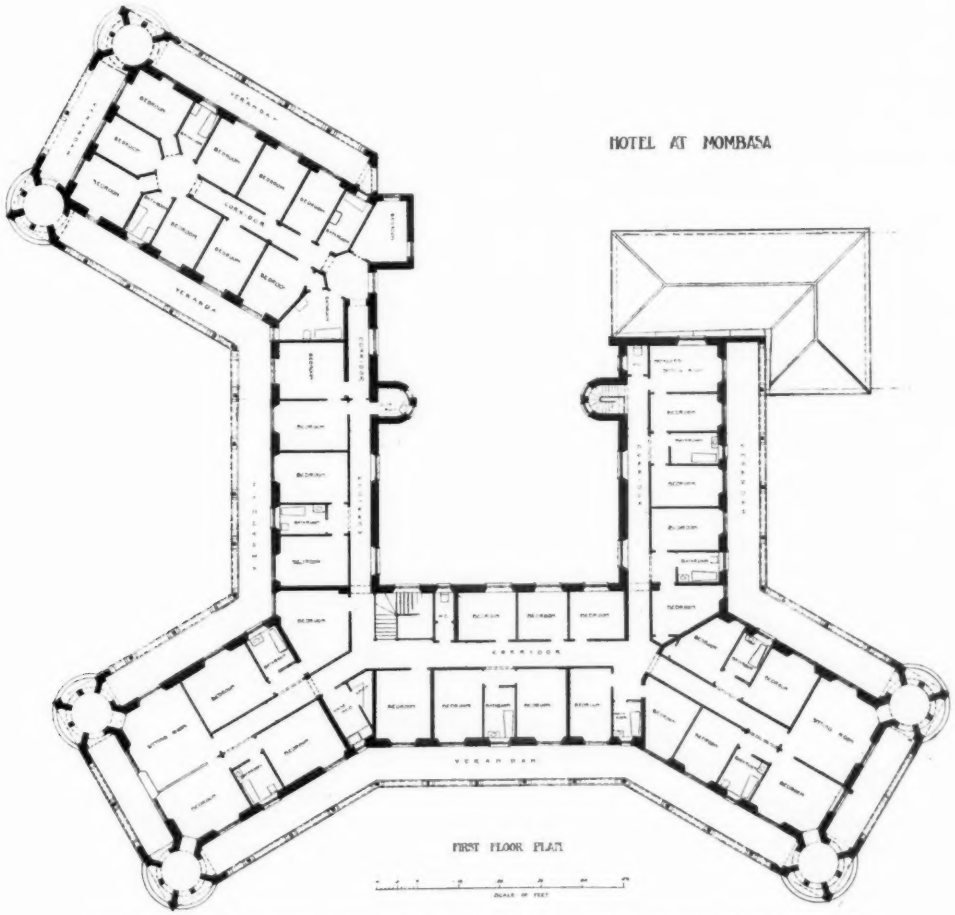


HOTEL AT MOMBASA, EAST AFRICA: GROUND-FLOOR PLAN. (MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)

the most efficient contrivance at present upon the market. Inside the box is a metal plunger, which presses against the glass and comes forward as soon as it is broken and gives the alarm.

One service-room on each floor should be equipped with an indicator and an alarm bell. On the face of the indicator would be numerous little apertures of about one inch square, each aperture representing a corridor on the various floors. Hence, should a fire break out in the main corridor on the sixth floor, and the alarm be given in the manner already indicated, the bell would ring in the service-room on each floor, and upon every indicator would appear a red disc in the aperture, indicating, for instance, "main corridor, floor 6th." Then the staff on each floor would know exactly in which corridor the fire had broken out.

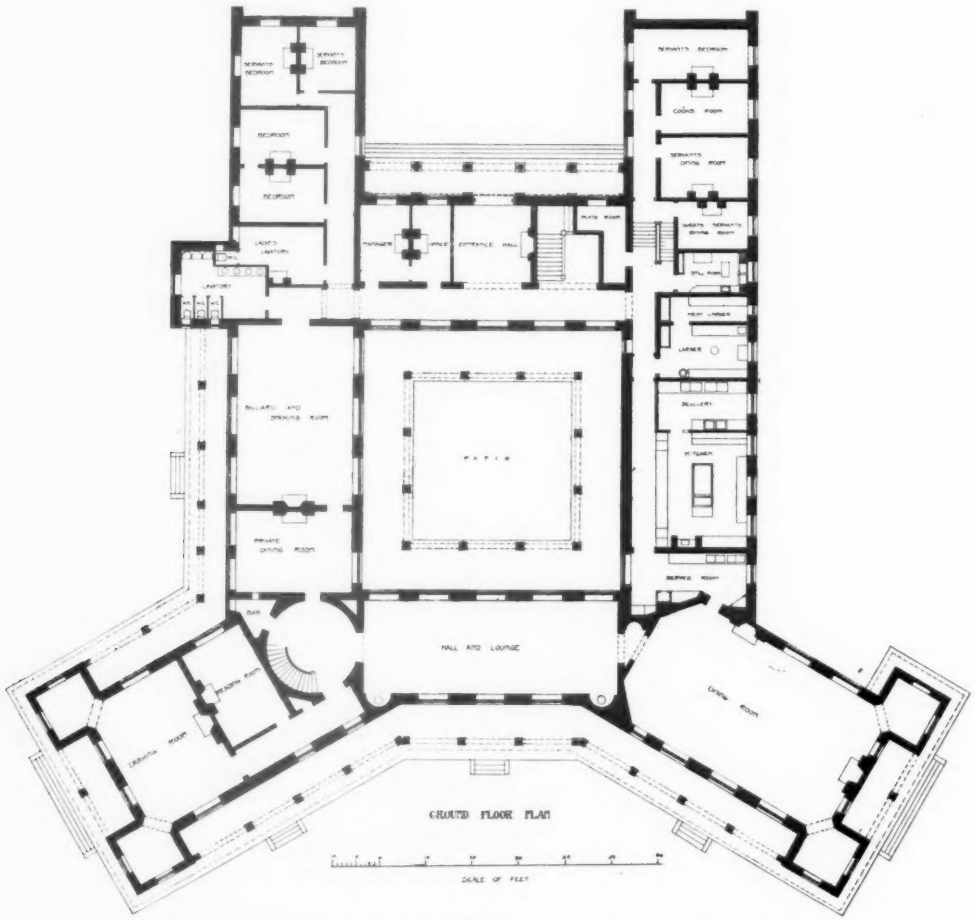
Fortunately some time has elapsed since we were electrified with vivid reports of the last great hotel fire, and the hope is, of course, that the warning thus given has had its due effect. It is undoubtedly true that most of our London hotels are to a certain extent safeguarded against fire; but whether the means taken are sufficient to ensure complete safety time and experience alone can tell. It must not be forgotten that the danger is always with us. The



HOTEL AT MOMBASA, EAST AFRICA: FIRST-FLOOR PLAN. (MESSRS. T. E. COLLCUTT AND STANLEY HAMP, ARCHITECTS.)

Savoy Hotel, being one of the largest in town, is well provided with means of escape; and if a fire occurred there would be little chance of it spreading. There are buckets and hand pumps, &c., on every floor, and the building is divided into sections by fireproof doors. The Grand Hotel is also practically safe against a big outbreak. It is in the hands of two firemen and twenty-eight well-drilled menservants. The building is patrolled every night by a fireman, who has to record his movements by an electrical device connected with the manager's office. Similar arrangements are made at the Hôtel Métropole. Here I understand that there is an arrangement with the superintendent of the Fire Brigade at Scotland Yard to put the men through their paces once a week; often an electric fire alarm is rung without any previous warning to test the efficiency of the staff. The danger of a fire and consequent panic in an hotel filled with guests is one surely which should be well pondered over by the proprietor of every establishment.

The "vacuum" cleaner is an innovation welcomed by the hotel manager. The labour

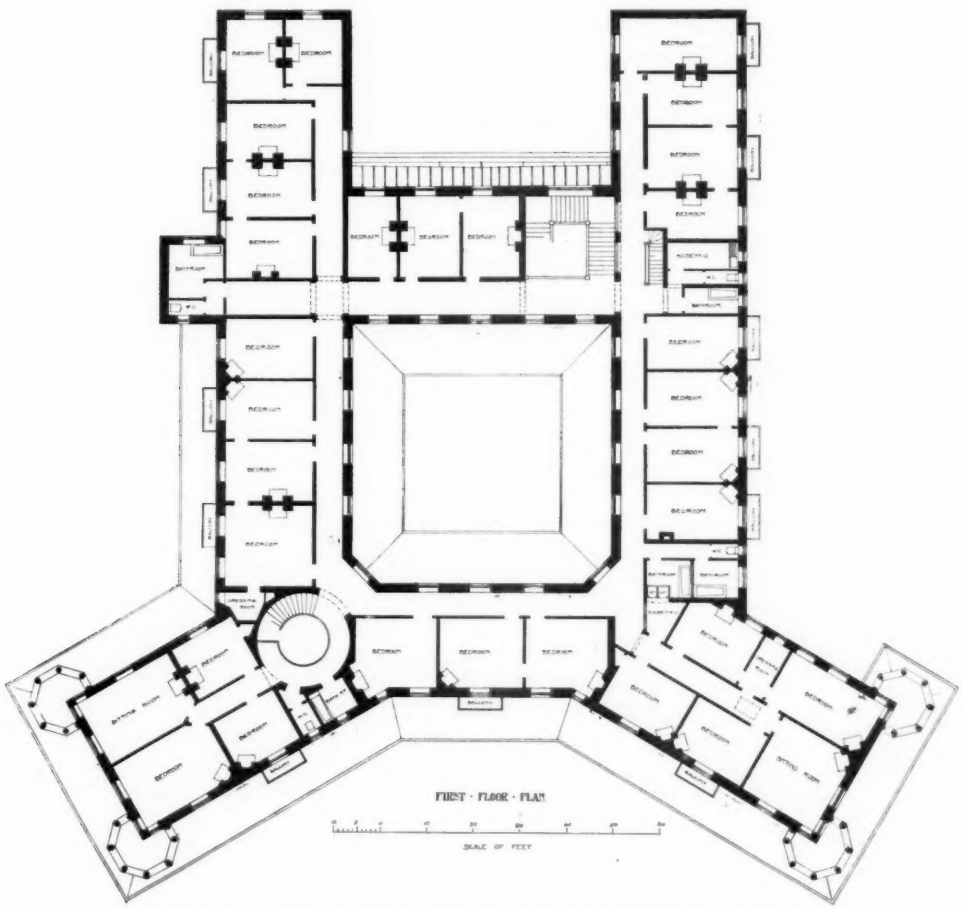


HOTEL REINA CRISTINA, ALGECIRAS: GROUND-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT.)

involved in cleaning a big establishment is enormous, and can be greatly minimised by that useful invention. Three have been installed in the Savoy Hotel, and have proved a great success. They can be used easily and at any time, being worked by an electric motor in the basement. The iron pipes in connection with the vacuum pump are carried up in the lift shafts and provided with connections on every floor. Flexible tubes are connected up to these points, the tubes being of sufficient length to reach every room on any particular floor.

The inestimable value of the telephone is now generally recognised in the business world, but its special utility as an hotel aid is also an established fact. Where the bedrooms of a large hotel are in telephonic communication with the office, guests can give their orders direct, thus saving much wear and tear so far as staff is concerned.

The uses and advantages of telephones in hotels are so numerous that to attempt to portray the whole of them in this Paper would be altogether out of the question. A few remarks on the subject, however, will, I think, serve to convince even the most dubious that the telephone is now no longer a luxury, but an absolute necessity in every well-appointed hotel.



HÔTEL REINA CRISTINA, ALGECIRAS: FIRST-FLOOR PLAN. (MR. T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT.)

A great many hotel proprietors, whilst fully recognising the utility of the indoor telephone, argue that the expense of installation would be too much for their pockets. Did they just give the matter sufficient thought, however, they would see that this is extremely short-sighted policy, as, although of course there is the initial outlay to consider, the fact must not be lost sight of that the telephone is essentially a labour-saving appliance the use of which enables the hotelkeeper to reduce his staff of servants, thus effecting a considerable saving in wages—a point well worthy of consideration. It may be safely said that in an hotel fully equipped with telephones three servants could easily cope with work which would otherwise fully occupy the time and attention of four or five.

In each bedroom a telephone should be fitted, preferably within easy reach of the bed, so that when a visitor is in need of anything all he requires to do is to press the push-button in the instrument and give whatever instructions he may desire through the telephone in the usual way. Where telephones are not fitted it would obviously be necessary for the servant to come all the way from the service-room, take the order, go back again to procure what was required, then deliver it and again return; it will therefore be seen what a great amount of bustling and running about is saved in this respect alone.

The private telephone exchange through which the domestic service passes should also be in connection with the public exchange, so that guests can, if they wish, transact their business from their sitting-rooms or bedrooms.

It is the internal arrangement of the kitchen and offices which most concerns an hotel manager, and the architect should, where possible, consult him if he is to obtain satisfactory technical results.

Practical men know full well that although modern ideas insist upon lavish expenditure in the decoration and furnishing of the public part of an hotel, yet it will not do to neglect the kitchen. As a matter of fact the kitchen is the laboratory where the reputation of the hotel is made or marred. I propose, therefore, to deal somewhat in detail with this important department. Give the kitchen staff plenty of light and ventilation, and let the ranges, grilles, and ovens and hot plates be of the best procurable, and see that plenty of utensils are at hand. The greatest loss in many an otherwise thriving establishment chiefly goes on in the kitchen.

Everything bought for the hotel should pass through the receiving-rooms, also everything sold by the hotel, as wines, &c. No bills should come to the receiving-room. The clerk there is only interested in receiving the goods; the matter of prices concerns the auditing and controlling departments only.

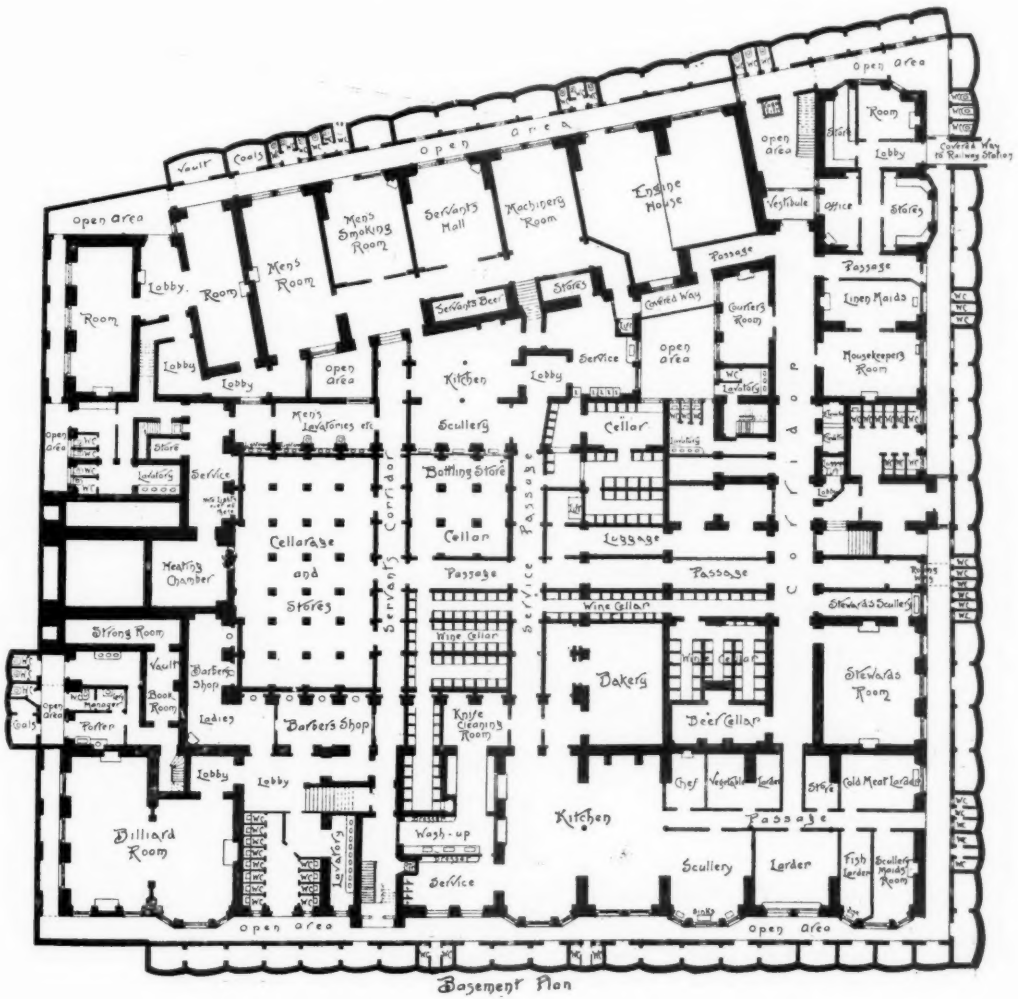
The walls of the kitchen, scullery, and larders should be either white tiles or glazed brickwork, and the floors of stone or "granolithic" or terrazzo.

The fittings (which I have no time to deal with to-night as they form a subject in themselves) should be of the best. Cheapness is false economy.

The position of the kitchen used to be a debatable point before electricity came so much into use, as to whether it should be on the top floor or in the basement; but with the application of electrically driven propelling fans and tubes for the supply of fresh air, and extracting fans fixed at the top of vent-tubes, and vent-shafts, it is now recognised that the most convenient position for the kitchen is on the same floor as the principal dining-rooms, or failing that on the floor, probably basement, immediately below them.

In the first place it is difficult to arrange proper draughts for the various flues for the cooking appliances on the top floor, for want of length of flue. It also prevents the use of the descending flue from hot plates, &c.; they would have to be ascending because of the rooms

below the kitchen, and this spoils the arrangement of the tops, because of the flues having to come through the top, and helps to make the kitchen hot by a long length of more or less heated flue tube. Neither can larders be kept so cool on a top floor, nor any of the general rooms and stores attached to the kitchen department ; and servants' bedrooms, which would be more healthy at the top, have then to be placed in the basement, the kitchen department having taken the greater part of the top floor. Again, if the kitchen is so placed, all goods which are received in the basement would have to be sent up by lift, including coals, and all food after being cooked would have to be sent down again to be consumed. All kitchen refuse, cinders, ashes, vegetable matter, waste, would have to be brought down to the basement, entailing additional lift power and men. Whereas in hotels with the kitchen below the bulk of the food travels once up one floor, from basement to ground floor.

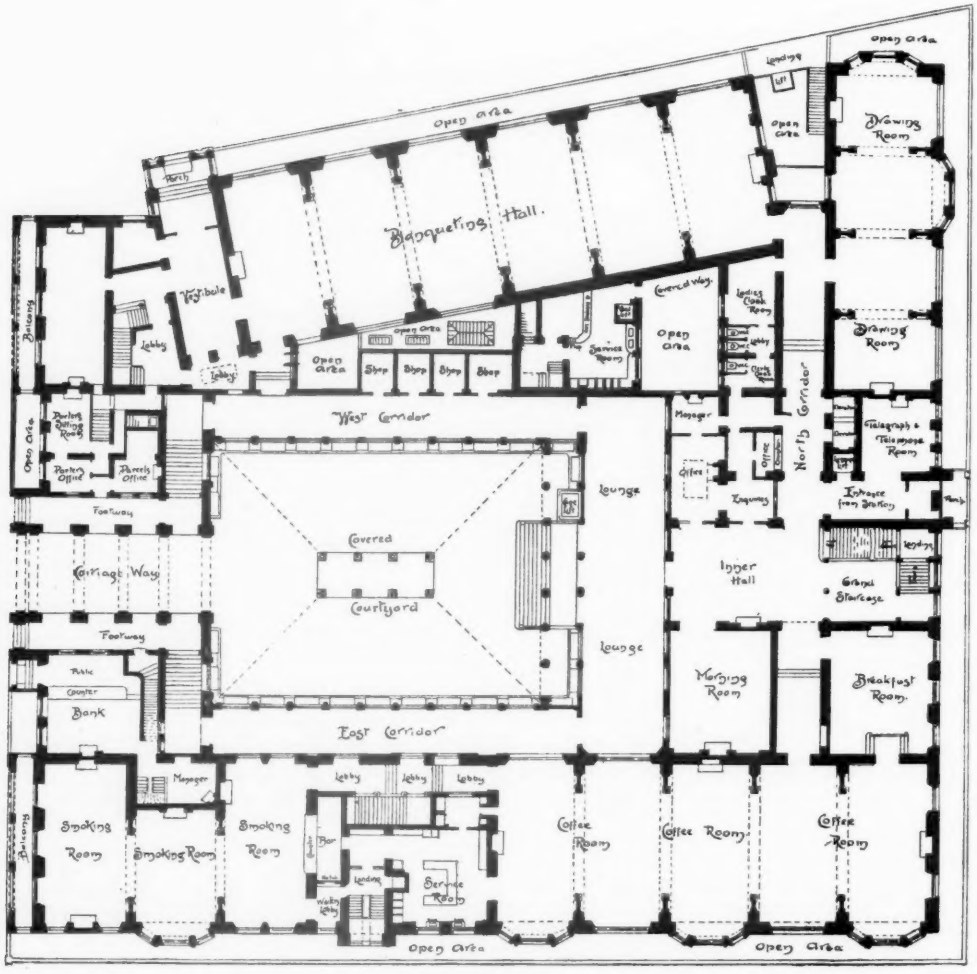


HOTEL GREAT CENTRAL, LONDON : BASEMENT PLAN. (COLONEL R. W. EDIS, ARCHITECT.)

In setting out the kitchen, larders, &c., it is advisable that the food and goods should come in on one side of the tradesmen's entrance, and after having been weighed and checked by the receiving clerk and timekeeper, who also records the going and coming of servants as well as goods, the various articles can be distributed to their proper places, such as stores, larders, which should run along corridors each side of the kitchen.

The kitchen may be said to be practically divided into five working sections, consisting of roast, soup, sauce and entrée, vegetable and fish ; the vegetable and fish should be partially divided, although forming part of the general arrangement of the kitchen, and pastry and bread, which need not form any part of the general arrangement of the kitchen, but can be, and often are, separate from, but should be near the kitchen and service-rooms.

Ice and ice-making arrangements are often placed near and following on to the pastry and



GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL GREAT CENTRAL, LONDON: GROUND PLAN. (COLONEL H. W. EDIS, ARCHITECT.)

confectionery from the fact that one of these particular set of cooks makes the ices ; but as there is always a certain amount of wet from the melting ice, I think it better to place this beyond the general traffic to and from the kitchen and larders. The service-room should be as near as possible to the kitchen and larders, and fitted with lifts.

The plate-cleaning, knives, and general scullery should be close to the service-rooms and kitchen, because plate and crockery are required in the kitchen department as well as upstairs.

The pot-scouring and cleaning scullery should be near the kitchen, so that the copper and other utensils can be cleaned quickly and returned to the kitchen ; and if this is the case, you can do with a less number of them of the different sizes.

Vegetable scullery and store should lead from the vegetable kitchen, having separate entrance for the vegetables to save going through the kitchen.

The fish larder and store has to be placed a little farther away than the vegetable, because of any warmth that might travel from the kitchen.

The chef's room should be as near the kitchen as possible, and at the same time close to his *hors-d'œuvre* and principal stores.

— FIRST FLOOR PLAN —

HÔTEL GREAT CENTRAL, LONDON : FIRST-FLOOR PLAN. (COLONEL R. W. EDIS, ARCHITECT.)

There should be also arranged a place for kitchen coals; a chef's store for soap, soda, salt, utensils, and such like; a cook's room, dressing-room and lavatory, servants' hall, steward's room, waiters' dressing-room and lavatory, and, where women or kitchenmaids are employed, a women's dressing-room and lavatory; boots, drying-room, linen-room, linen-store, linen-room mending; luggage, bicycle, and motor garage on ground floor.

Wine and beer cellars, with platform lifts or slopes, generally surround the kitchen offices. I advise doors to shut off each corridor enclosing the kitchen department, larders, &c., to prevent articles being shifted or lifted.

The raw meat, game and poultry larders, should be provided with the ice refrigerating process or cool room. The cold and hot pastry room, with its general store, flour, &c., are usually arranged running opposite to and parallel with the kitchen.

The lifts from the service-room below should serve, on the ground floor if possible, into a waiters' pantry and service-room, and hatch for stillroom, so that the waiters can take from the kitchen, and pick up at the stillroom hatch, to supply the coffee-room and dining-room.

The service-room on the ground floor should be placed (if there is only one) so as to serve the coffee-room, dining-room, and restaurant. In large hotels there are sometimes two or three service-rooms, particularly where the carving is done in the service-room and not in the dining-room or banqueting rooms.

Service-rooms, waiters' pantries, or housemaids' rooms would be required on the various floors. The glass pantry should always be on the same floor as the dining-room, otherwise the breakage will be very heavy.

In conclusion I desire to thank publicly the many architects who have so kindly loaned me the plans and views of the various hotels shown to-night.

DISCUSSION OF THE FOREGOING PAPER.

Mr. Edwin T. Hall, *Vice-President*, in the Chair.

Mr. JOHN SLATER, B.A.Lond. [*F.*], who was called upon by the Chairman, said that the subject was so vast, and the matters pertaining to a large hotel so numerous and of such great importance, that it had been almost impossible to follow the Paper in many of the details described. The plans themselves, too, were so complicated that an hour's study at least would be required to enable one to criticise them with advantage. The views shown of the old inns were extremely interesting, and so were the allusions to the designations of some of the signs which survived. He might mention as another instance the "Goat and Compasses," a corruption, he believed, of "God encompasseth us"; and the "Bag o' Nails," a sign borne by one or two inns in the country, corrupted from "The Bacchanals." Mr. Hamp had mentioned that there should be, if possible, only one entrance and exit for the staff. That, however, was a counsel of perfection, because the London County Council required that in hotels, whether large or small, the means of exit from the basement and ground floors, wherever they might be, should be so arranged that the doors could be opened by a mere push from the outside. He himself was now engaged in the erection of an hotel, and he pointed out to the County Council officials that such a requisition made an hotel almost impossible to manage; because, if there were a certain number of exits which could be pushed open without any control, at any hour of the day or night, provision would be afforded for entrance into the hotel of extremely undesirable characters. The County Council had admitted the force of this representation, but they said that they were not concerned with the management or profits of an hotel; their only concern was the possibility of getting people out in case of fire. The matter was further complicated by the fact that the regulations of the Council appeared not to recognise that in a modern hotel the whole building was practically fireproof, and if that was the case, there was very little danger of fire. There was, of course, the risk of panic from other causes, and no hotel manager could afford to ignore such a risk; consequently, they had to provide not necessarily against danger from fire, but against panic from smoke; and that made it necessary to arrange separate exits from nearly all the floors downstairs, or he believed the Council would be satisfied if all the occupants of the hotel could be got on to the roof by one staircase and down by another. In London, however, where

land was extremely valuable, and where the area of the site was also limited, this created a very great difficulty. The arrangement of the kitchens on the ground floor was also, in most cases, a counsel of perfection, because there were very few cases where the area of the site was sufficient to allow of the kitchen and a service-room and the various rooms which must be connected with the kitchen being on the same floor as the coffee-room, restaurant, &c. They were therefore bound in most cases to have the kitchen in the basement; and he quite agreed with Mr. Hamp that such an arrangement was infinitely better than having the kitchen on the top floor. Lavatory accommodation in an hotel required very careful consideration. He himself was inclined to the opinion that it was desirable to have the lavatory and bathroom and w.c. together, shut off by a lobby, because if the w.c. were close to the bathroom the heated pipes in the bathroom made that portion of the building rather warmer than the corridors of the hotel; the consequence was that there would generally be a draught from the corridor into the bathroom, rather than the other way, which was a very great desideratum. He was quite sure they would all agree that a very hearty vote of thanks should be passed to Mr. Hamp for the trouble he had taken in preparing his Paper, and for the interesting collection of views and plans with which he had illustrated it.

Mr. E. A. GRUNING [*F.*] said that he himself from the earliest period he had been in business had studied hotel work, and had more or less successfully carried out buildings of that class; and he quite recognised the difficulties Mr. Hamp and his well-known partner had had to contend with in the work they had carried through with such success at the Savoy. The difficulties in hotel planning were very great. The architect was hampered by the nature of the site, by the nature of the requisitions, and by the nature of the trade carried on. He thought hardly sufficient stress had been laid on the most important man on the hotel staff, namely, the cook. After him came the wine butler; but the cook was *the* man, and no hotel without a first-rate cook would succeed, however well designed, however well planned, however well built. He might enlarge upon a great many points in connection with the arrangement and management of an hotel, but he would not do so at that late hour. They had all enjoyed Mr. Hamp's very able Paper, and he had the most cordial pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks.

Mr. WILLIAM WOODWARD [*F.*] asked leave to support the observations made by Mr. Slater and Mr. Gruning with regard to the Paper. They would all agree that the planning of an hotel required as much skill, thought, and knowledge as the planning of any building that could be erected in this or any other country. The enormous amount of detail one had to think of in making a success of an hotel must be apparent to all who had heard Mr. Hamp's Paper. Having been in the Savoy Hotel, and having stayed for a few days in that beautiful hotel at Algeciras, in his opinion there was no architect or firm of architects who knew more than Mr. Collcutt and Mr. Hamp how to design and equip an hotel. If he troubled the Meeting with a few observations, it was not with the idea of adding to what Mr. Hamp had said, but merely to emphasise a few points which had arisen during the erection of the Piccadilly Hotel, the most recent with which he had had to do. Mr. Hamp summed up the requirements of an hotel in one sentence, and the planner of an hotel who could conform to those requirements would do all that was necessary both for his client and for the public. Those requirements were abundance of light and air, comfort, good attendance, faultless *cuisine*, and perfect sanitation. But there was one feature in the planning of an hotel which they should all desire to attain if possible on the site, one that was well exemplified in Mr. Cutler's plan of the Hôtel Métropole, Folkestone, which Mr. Hamp had followed so far as possible in planning—viz., with regard to the whole upper floors, simplicity of planning. The corridor principle with a window at each end was about the simplest and best plan which could be adopted for an hotel. Those who had been abroad, and had come home perhaps rather late to their hotels, would know how delightful it was to find themselves in their right corridor and all they had to do was to find the number of their bedroom. That, he was sure, would commend itself to everybody. Another important point Mr. Hamp had touched upon—and that Mr. Gruning had secured particularly in De Keyser's Hotel—was economy of service. There were one or two hotels in London where the service had been so badly planned, necessitating so many attendants, waiters, and staff, that it was absolutely impossible, with the utmost care and the utmost attention, to secure financial success. Those of them who had studied in detail the planning of an hotel would know that one of the greatest points was to secure this economy of service, if financial success was to result. Mr. Hamp's reference to larders reminded him of the perfection to which the larder accommodation had been brought. He had gone over the service rooms of the Elysée Palace Hotel in Paris, and had been shown the larder, and particularly the live-fish larder—a beautiful apartment, glazed with white glazed bricks, where the live fish were swimming about in a tank. The guest could go down to the fish larder and point out the fish he wished to have. The *chef* would take it out of the water with his net, and in a quarter of an hour it would be served up at table ready for eating. That, he thought, was the perfection of fish larders. With regard to the army of servants Mr. Hamp referred to, there was one hotel in London where underneath the ground floor, scarcely ever seen by visitors, there was a staff of over 200 persons. Anyone who had had to do with the financial part of an hotel would know what it meant to keep such a staff—some of them very expensively

paid—beneath the ground floor. With regard to the ventilation and heating of a large hotel he must confess that that was a subject he did not feel competent to administer. He thought that might be very properly left, as it was in the case, at all events of the Piccadilly Hotel, in the hands of an expert who was thoroughly accustomed to it. Another important matter was the question of locks to bedroom doors—locks that would prevent the chambermaid or waiter from coming in at inopportune moments; locks that could only be opened with the master-key by the manager himself in case of suicide or illness; locks simple enough to be understood by guests coming home late. Another important point was the provision of perfectly sound-proof partitions. At the Piccadilly Hotel they had tried many partitions: two or three favoured one kind, and two or three favoured another; and at last they had arrived, he hoped, at a thoroughly sound-proof partition, which was only about 4½ to 5 inches thick, and which did secure immunity from the travel of conversation from one room to another. This was an important point, because where families occupied different suites of rooms, sometimes a member of the family would raise his voice so as to be heard distinctly in the other suite, and it was most desirable to have a sound-proof partition. This particular partition, which he would not name, secured that end. The double doors between rooms was another important point. Mr. Hamp went further, and not only provided double doors, but suggested a slab of asbestos being placed between the doors, so as to prevent the transmission of sound. Anyone would appreciate this point who had slept in a bedroom with a single communicating door, where there happened to be in the adjoining bedroom a gentleman whose somnolence was not absolutely silent, whose deep organ going through the night made sleep impossible to his neighbour—one envied him his sound sleep, while one regretted his not being sound-proof! As regards the lavatories, in the Piccadilly Hotel they could be all fitted with hot, cold, and waste pipes, so that the guest had not to wait in the morning for the chambermaid to bring hot water; he would find it always ready to his hand. In building an hotel in London it was absolutely necessary to have double windows to prevent noise penetrating the rooms. The difficulty of making those double windows with French casements was very great, to secure the cleaning and opening and shutting them as they should be, and so endeavour had been made at the Piccadilly Hotel to arrange transom lights to open simultaneously. He quite agreed with what had been said as to the importance of lobbies, which practically made the suites into distinct apartments.

Mr. ERNEST RUNTZ, referring to the development in hotel enterprise brought about by changes in locomotion since the old coaching days, said he hoped that the advent of the motor car would be useful in preserving to them some of the old hostelries and coaching yards, which would now serve the new purpose of receiving the motor cars in lieu of the stage coach of ancient times. These old inns, he hoped, would not be done away with as they had anticipated, but there would be a revival and success and prosperity for them in the future; for once in a way a modern innovation might prevent vandalism. The subject before them would occupy them with pleasure for many hours, so many were its ramifications, and so many its difficulties, arising not only with regard to planning, but to a large extent also in connection with the particular class of customer catered for. Mr. Woodward's suggestion that everybody should arrange for a window at the end of each corridor, and that everything should be light, he quite agreed with; but that was almost an impossibility in large cities. With regard to economy of service, that all depended upon the site and upon the nature of the hotel. There was no doubt whatever that in the Savoy Hotel Messrs. Collcutt and Hamp had had a most difficult problem to deal with; they had to make a silken purse, so to speak, out of a sow's ear, and in this they had admirably succeeded. With regard to the Ritz Hotel and the Waldorf, there the architects had a clean slate. Sometimes, however, a clean slate was one of the most difficult problems one could have to deal with; but he must say—and he could say it perfectly freely with regard to planning—that he had never seen anything better than the Waldorf or the Ritz. He did not know which to like best, except that perhaps there was a little waste in the Ritz in the case of those magnificent bathrooms in the centre; but the principle on which the planning was done was a most excellent one. Mr. Woodward had referred to sound-proof partitions. He (the speaker) had heard of an asbestos slab between double doors. It was wise for every architect to come in contact with the man who had to control and manage the hotel and make it a success. He remembered one manager saying, "Do not put asbestos between; put a spare mattress—it is better." With regard to the kitchen, he had had something to do with hotels and restaurants, and so far as was possible in the interest of his clients he tried to keep the arrangement of the kitchen (barring the principle as to quick service) till the very last moment; he had always found that if one put up the kitchen and service-rooms before the manager was appointed, the first thing he would do was to have the whole thing altered. At the Gaiety Restaurant, with which he had been concerned, they had had flats in the top—which was rather unique in view of its arrangement—they had banqueting halls of various sizes and characters, and they had a general restaurant. That wanted special dealing with in connection with the service, and they arranged to have there three services. They had first of all the kitchen in the basement, then a kitchen on the top floor. In the top they worked for the flats and

special banqueting halls, and at the bottom they worked the restaurant and general hotel. They found this arrangement worked admirably—there had been no hitch from start to finish; but he did not think it was possible to fix on any absolute plan with regard to the kitchen and services until the class of business to be dealt with was actually known. There were so many varieties of hotels and restaurants that it must be left to those who had to govern the whole concern to make it a commercial success to guide to a certain extent and be guided by the architect.

THE CHAIRMAN, in putting the vote of thanks, said that they had had one of the most interesting evenings he remembered at the Institute for a long time, because Mr. Hamp had brought to their notice that which was certainly one of the most up-to-date problems in big cities, namely, the building of large hotels, which were a feature of the last twenty-five years. He remembered that when the Langham was built, everybody said it was madness to build such a big hotel; it could not possibly last. That, however, was a perfect baby compared with some of their later hotels. That showed the development and the change in social life and the social condition of the country. Many people who used to have town houses now lived in hotels; and, though the prices were very high, they were stated to be much cheaper than private houses would be. It rather staggered one to know the prices paid in some of these places: four or five guineas a night for a bedroom, bathroom, and a little sitting-room appeared to be an ordinary charge. Mr. Hamp had drawn attention to so much detail that his Paper would become a text-book on the subject, and would be referred to by many who were studying hotel construction. It was one of the features of the Institute that the men who did the work gave away their knowledge for those who were to come behind and cut them out. There were one or two points that had not been touched upon that he would just say a word about. One was the question of electrical plant and heating. He quite endorsed what Mr. Hamp had said with regard to the economy of having an electrical plant in a big institution. It would be found that the exhaust steam from the engines which drove the electrical plant would do the heating of a big institution for nothing—that meant a saving of perhaps £300 or £400 a year when they were dealing with a large hotel like the Savoy or the Carlton, and it might mean £1,000 a year. Another matter was the question of fire alarms in an hotel. They were a very essential feature, because one of the first things that made an hotel a success, when it had a fine cuisine and that kind of thing to recommend it, was the feeling the guests possessed of security from danger; and hotel managers were very alive to that point. There were various appliances for avoiding panic in the event of fire. Mr. Hamp dealt with the details of some of these; and in connection with fire alarms it was a very usual practice now to have a lamp, on which the direction of the exit was marked, on every floor; so that if a panic occurred the guest coming out of his bedroom would know instantly where to find the staircase. Some year or two ago he had had to make very careful surveys and to report on some of the biggest hotels in London—amongst them the Carlton, the Russell, and the Great Central—and he had been very much struck with the great care that had been paid generally to this matter. With regard to cleaning, it was astonishing what developments had taken place in "vacuum cleaning." The latest was to have a vacuum cleaning apparatus attached to the engines in the basements, with valves fitted upon the skirtings of every room in the place, so that the only thing the man had to do was to take the cap off and put a tube on, and all the dust of the rooms could be exhausted through the tubes right away to the basement and taken away. With regard to the position of the kitchens, there again it was important to notice the great difference in planning. Every building must be planned to suit its particular site and to suit the particular style of hotel. In the Hotel Russell there was a magnificent kitchen which was lighted entirely by windows at the side. In the Carlton Hotel the kitchen was right in the centre of the building underneath the big dining-rooms and the Palm Garden, as he believed it was called. It was really a remarkable sight to go down there and see the vast staff working in absolutely artificial light, and yet in a place that was thoroughly well ventilated; and the business was done in the most orderly and marvellous way. A great feature about the security he had referred to was the egress from the staircases. In the St. Ermine's Hotel, designed by himself some twenty years ago, there were six main staircases, and every one of them went up to the roof, the roof being fireproof. There was a means of escape by every staircase on to the roof, and one could come down any of the others. In a similar way there was an egress on the ground floor. That was a subject which required the very greatest care and attention; it was not always attended to with such care as he thought was necessary. He remembered one hotel where the fire-escape staircase ended in a pit in the basement, where there was no possibility of anyone getting out.

MR. HAMP, in responding to the vote of thanks, said the subject was much too large to be dealt with in so short a time, and he had been able to touch only on the fringe of it. He should have liked to explain more in detail the various plans shown upon the screen, but that alone would have taken up the whole evening. Many of them, however, would be published in the JOURNAL, where they would have a better opportunity of studying them. Mr. Runtz, who had so kindly come among them that evening, had very ably touched upon the subject, and he would like again to thank him for his kindness in lending the slides, and for other assistance he had received from him.

9, Conduit Street, London, W., 13*th April* 1907.

CHRONICLE.

The President.

Mr. Edwin T. Hall, *Vice-President*, who presided at the General Meeting of the 8th inst., in calling upon Mr. Stanley Hamp for his Paper on "Hotel Planning" reminded members of Mr. Hamp's association in partnership with their President. Mr. Collcutt, he said, had been most anxious to be present that evening. He had, however, scarcely recovered from his recent severe illness when business affairs in Spain claimed his attention, and he had been obliged a day or two previously to set out for that country.

The Appointment of District Surveyors.

Mr. Frederick Wallen [*F.*], President of the District Surveyors' Association, has addressed the following letter, under date 20th March, to the Chairman and Members of the London County Council:—

My Lords and Gentlemen,—I am desired by the District Surveyors' Association to address you on behalf of its members upon the subject of the appointment of District Surveyors, a subject important alike to them and to the public.

The nature and importance of the duties and powers the District Surveyor is called upon to exercise make it essential that the office shall be held by gentlemen of high position and attainments. The interests of the public are clearly best served by being committed to the care of architects skilled professionally and technically in the intricacies of building operations, and acquainted with all the many new methods and improvements. It is a great advantage to the public that the District Surveyor should be a practising architect rather than a mere Inspector, who necessarily would not have the same practical experience of the difficulties arising from time to time in actual practice. An architect is more conversant with these difficulties, and more competent to solve them and to exercise the discretion thrust upon the District Surveyor by the peculiar nature of the technical law that he is called upon to administer; he is frequently in a position to confer great service upon the building public by his experience, advice and opinion in matters not strictly within his duties under the Acts. This is especially so in the case of the erection of public buildings and the execution of works required by the Act of 1905. It is important, therefore, that the District Surveyor be one whose rank in his profession entitles his opinion to respect and commands the confidence of all with whom his duties bring him in contact.

Such, evidently, was the dominant characteristic of all the long series of statutes extending down to and including the Building Act of 1894, in all of which it has been specially provided that the administration of the law relating to buildings shall be entrusted to specially qualified professional architects. That it was intended that he should remain an architect in actual practice is clear from Section 144 of the Act of 1894, which re-enacts the provisions of the former Acts as follows: "If any building or structure be executed, or any work done to, in or upon any building or structure by or under the superintendence of any District Surveyor acting professionally or on his own private account, that surveyor shall not survey such building or structure for the purpose of this Act, or act as District Surveyor in respect thereof, or in any matter connected therewith; but it shall be his duty to give notice to the Council, who shall then appoint some other District Surveyor to act in respect of the matter." This was the accepted position until 1888, and all the District Surveyors appointed until that date were and remained architects in practice. When, however, the London County Council was constituted, and the appointment of new District Surveyors was transferred to that body, the method of appointment was considered by them, the particular object in view being, as expressed in a letter to this Association from the Clerk to the Council, dated 22nd October 1889, "the elevation of the office of District Surveyor." All District Surveyors subsequently appointed have been required to surrender their practice. It was the opinion of all professional bodies consulted at the time that such alteration would not have the effect desired, but, on the other hand, would be detrimental to the office. It is submitted by this Association that the alteration has not satisfactorily stood the test of time, but is now shown by the light of experience not to have been a success.

Formerly many men of the highest eminence in the architectural profession, including no fewer than five who subsequently became Presidents of the Royal Institute of British Architects, presented themselves as candidates for the office; but men of such standing are not willing to exchange a successful or promising practice for a district surveyorship under existing conditions.

During the last three years of the existence of the Metropolitan Board of Works—viz., from 28th February 1885 to 3rd March 1888—seventeen new District Surveyors were elected. At these elections as many as thirty-eight candidates have presented themselves, the average being thirty-three; but upon the institution of the restriction on private practice in 1890, the number of candidates fell to little more than half that number: many of the best qualified men would not subscribe to the conditions.

The same falling-off is apparent in the number of candidates for examination for the Certificate of Competency. During the years 1856 to 1890 the number of certificates granted averaged 6·4 per annum; but since 1890, the year when the present conditions of appointment were instituted, the average has only been 3·3 per annum. In the years 1894 and 1897 no certificate was granted.

There are now vacancies in fourteen districts (the accumulation of the last three years) which are now under the care of temporary substitutes, the majority of whom are practising architects. This Association would therefore respectfully suggest to the Council that the restrictions now attached to the appointment of District Surveyors may be reconsidered, as those restrictions have, in their opinion, proved detrimental to the office and to the public, and tend to make the District Surveyors lose touch with the difficulties of actual practice.

The provisions made by the Act of 1894 are amply sufficient to secure the due and proper execution by the Dis-

trict Surveyor of his duties, and the avoidance of any abuse. In addition to Section 144 quoted above, which prevents any possibility of a District Surveyor acting in the dual capacity of architect and district surveyor upon the same work, Section 143 provides that "where it appears to the Council that, on account of the pressure of business in any district, or on any other account, the surveyor of that district cannot discharge his duties promptly and efficiently, the Council may direct any other District Surveyor to assist the surveyor of that district in the performance of his duties, or appoint some other person to give such assistance; and the Assistant Surveyor shall be entitled to receive all fees payable in respect of the services performed by him."

This undoubtedly requires the District Surveyor to personally discharge the duties of his office, and confers full power on the Council to deal with any contingency that could arise, so that the public are fully protected.

This Association therefore respectfully submits that the office of District Surveyor has not been "elevated," but has suffered by the change, and that it is in the interest of the public that the Council should revert to the previous system, and that the restriction now placed upon the exercise of their profession by District Surveyors, other than those imposed by the statutes, should be removed. In this event it is believed that the Royal Institute of British Architects would be willing to at once hold an additional statutory examination, when there is every probability that a number of architects of attainment and experience who have hitherto been hindered by the restrictions would present themselves for qualification.—I have the honour to be, my Lords and Gentlemen, yours faithfullly,

FREDERICK WALLEN,
President District Surveyors' Association.

School Hygiene.

The Second International Congress on School Hygiene is to be held in London, under the patronage of His Majesty the King, from the 5th to the 10th August next. The President is Sir Lauder Brunton; Dr. James Kerr and E. White Wallis, Hon. Secretaries. Section XI.—"The School Building and its Equipment"—will be presided over by the President of the Institute, Mr. T. E. Collcutt. Mr. J. Osborne Smith [*F.*] is one of the Hon. Secretaries of this section. Each set subject arranged for discussion will be opened by three selected speakers in English, French, and German. A discussion on the Lighting and Ventilating of Class-rooms will be opened by Sir Aston Webb, R.A. The office of the Congress is at the Royal Sanitary Institute, Margaret Street, W.

Public Library Planning.

To the Editor JOURNAL R.I.B.A.—

DEAR SIR,—In the Paper of great interest on Libraries (JOURNAL, 23rd March), I observed that in the discussion which followed Messrs. Godfrey Page and J. Osborne Smith advocated that wide gangways between book-stacks were unnecessary. The former cited the Chelsea Library, on the indicator system (fiction only), where the stacks are only 2 feet 4 inches apart in the clear, and stated that that was enough.

I have it on the authority of the assistant librarian, who works the lending room, that it is not satisfactory, for on stooping to obtain books from the lower shelves the position taken by the body disarranges the books immediately behind; extra labour is therefore involved. When there is a rush of borrowers, their services are hampered by not having sufficient room for two persons to pass.

The minimum space apart in the clear, I consider, is 2 feet 9 inches; the most convenient spacing is 3 feet apart.—Yours faithfully,

J. MYRTLE SMITH [*A.*].

Inscriptions on Old Inn Windows.

Considerations of space and the desire to concentrate attention on the essentials of his subject induced Mr. Stanley Hamp to score out a good deal of matter which found place in the original draft of his Paper on Hotel Planning read at the Institute last Monday. Among the rejected passages were specimens of inscriptions cut by guests of a long-departed generation on the windows of some old-time inns still remaining to us. Hotel guests had fewer distractions in those days perhaps, and to perpetuate their names by scratching them more or less elegantly on the windows of the inn seemed a favourite device for beguiling the tedium of a long wait perhaps for a belated coach on a dismal day.

A window in a Surrey hostelry, says Mr. Hamp, is completely disfigured by numberless autographs of nonentities, and in the middle of the centre pane, conspicuous among the maze of signatures, is the following epigram:—

"Should you ever chance to see
A man's name writ on glass
Be sure he owns a diamond
And his parents own an ass."

The following, written on the coffee-room window of a Thames-side inn, recalls the pungent wit familiar to us in the lampoons of the coffee-house rhymester of a century or more ago:—

"I told the waiter James
To fetch me for my picken
Some Beaune of '87
And a tender little chicken.
He took my order in a trice,
But as I hope for Heaven
The wine was bottled in the spring,
The bird was 87!"

New County Hall, London.

The following supplemental notes have been issued for addition to the Conditions [JOURNAL, 9th February, p. 225] issued to competitors for designs for the New County Hall, London:—

"(*a*) Any further information required by competitors must be applied for to the assessors, and addressed to the County Hall, Spring Gardens, London, S.W., in the form of separate questions on or before Wednesday, the first day of May, 1907, after which date no further questions can be considered.

(*b*) Those questions which it is necessary to answer will

be replied to, and the information supplied to all competitors; such replies will then form part of the conditions.

(c) For the immediate information of competitors the scale for the drawings for the preliminary competition has been definitely decided by the Council to be 16 ft. to an inch, and in view of the possibility of most of the competitors having considerably advanced their design no alteration in the scale can now be made."

A COURT OF BUILDING FOR LONDON.

By JOHN W. SIMPSON [*F.*].

[From *The Times*, 29th March 1907.]

THE path of the man of London on his way to build is, like that of good Christian, set full of snares, traps, gins, and nets. While he seeks in the dark Building Act to shun the ditch full of district surveyors on the one hand, he is ready to tip over on the other into the mire where swarm the inspecting nuisances hatched by borough by-laws. Thus he goes on; and what wonder that we hear him "sigh bitterly."

And now he is met this year by Apollyon himself, who has "strodled quite over the whole breadth of the way" in the shape of the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act of 1905, with its powers not only as to new but as to existing buildings.

All who have had to do with building in London, whether as employers or executants, know that the London Building Acts form a portly volume, complicate with by-laws, schedules, forms, and technical definitions, the interpretation whereof leaves layman and expert alike bewildered. A prominent district surveyor recently stated in public that, having been invited by a member of the County Council to deliver a lecture on "the real building law of London," with a view to making the matter perfectly clear, he had replied that he "did not know anyone who had the ability to do that," and declined to attempt it. Remark, too, that his hearers expressed no surprise at this astounding declaration from an able gentleman whose business it is to administer the very law in question.

To appreciate their attitude we need only consider this appalling list of Acts regulating building in London. I am not sure if it is complete:—

The London Building Act, 1894.

The London Building Act, 1894 (Amendment), Act, 1898.

The Metropolis Management Act, 1855.

The Metropolis Local Management Acts Amendment Act, 1862.

The Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Act, 1878.

The London Council (General Powers) Act, 1890.

The Metropolis Management Amendment Act, 1893.

The Public Health (London) Act, 1891.

The Factory and Workshop Act, 1891.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1895.

London Building Acts (Amendment) Act, 1905.

The City of London, the metropolitan boroughs, the Tribunal of Appeal, and the County Council have added to these countless by-laws, schedules, and regulations on every conceivable subject—from the laying-out of streets to lamps and clocks and the exact pattern of caulking for an iron pipe—to the utter darkening of the understanding.

And the very grotesque itself is reached when the citizen who ventures to differ from an "authority" in the reading of this tangled bundle of clauses receives a "summons" to appear before a police magistrate, where, in the company of thieves, harlots, and the scum of the criminal classes, he must balance his opinion against that of his "prosecutor," and be "convicted" if unsuccessful by a Judge who knows even less of the discussion than the parties themselves.

Difficult as it is for the most honest intention to derive the meaning of the Building Acts where they purport to be precise, there remain many points upon which their compilers have despaired of laying down hard-and-fast rules, and have left them to be decided as occasion arises by "the discretion of the Council." Heights of buildings, projections, open spaces about buildings, lines of frontage, widths of streets, and such-like important matters fall within this category. Let us consider what the "discretion" really means.

The Council at each weekly meeting deals with some thirty or more "applications" made under these discretionary clauses of the 1894 Act—representing thousands of pounds in value to the applicants, and involving a nice equity of judgment in regard to individual and public interests—from all parts of the vast county under their control. A glance at the weekly agenda paper renders any question as to what consideration these applications can receive from the full Council unnecessary; they are, of course, agreed to or refused on the report of the "Building Act Committee," and we cannot, perhaps, expect more.

I am not here concerned to criticise the provisions of the Building Acts, which are, I think, on the whole beneficial; any attack upon the County Council is still less within my intention. But it does not make for good government that authority should be discredited, and the proceedings of the Building Act Committee have done more to render the Council unpopular with sober citizens than all the current loose talk about Thames steamers and Embankment trams. It is the "Star Chamber" of to-day. Sitting *in camera* for a few hours a week, hopelessly choked with work, it decides the fate of property which its members have never even seen; no applicant is allowed a hearing to support his case. Its decisions are made on the evidence of officials alone. I would even hazard a guess that the agenda paper comes before it ready marked with refusals and consents. Naturally the doings

of the committee are denounced as arbitrary and capricious, for none can depend upon obtaining consent to his request, however obviously reasonable. That the members honestly do their best I do not doubt; but if all those ratepayers who have suffered by the injustice and loss inflicted by this committee were to express their grievances in writing, I suppose *The Times* itself should not contain the correspondence.

I bear willing testimony to the courtesy and ability of the officials themselves; but that admirable Atlas, the superintending architect, were he multiplied by 20, could not, with his other enormous duties and responsibilities, acquaint himself with the merits of applications from all parts of London under the Building Acts. He in his turn leaves them to his subordinates. And it is fair to suppose that when Parliament entrusted decisions—under an Act of far-reaching consequence to the wealth and well-being of the community—to the discretion of the London County Council, it did not intend such a discretion to be exercised by the direction of officials, however capable. The result of the present system is that rather than face the delay, annoyance, and uncertainty of an application to the County Council, building owners often prefer to abandon work which entails it, as any architect will testify.

The Act of 1905, before referred to, has now brought matters to the climax of impossibility, for the Council is therein directed to examine in detail the drawings prepared for every new building of any importance, and approve or disapprove the methods proposed to meet the provisions of the Act. All who know the skill required to master a set of technical drawings will realise the helpless perplexity of the unfortunate amateurs who have undertaken this task, to say nothing of the even greater one of dealing with thousands of existing buildings.

Here is a state of things clearly intolerable, and a remedy is of instant importance.

Such a remedy is, I venture to submit, only to be found in the establishment of a properly constituted Court of Building for London somewhat on the lines of the Dean of Guild Courts of Scotland. The president of the Court must be a Judge, equal both in standing and salary to the Judges of the High Court, and there are among our practising barristers several whose knowledge of building matters and ability to "read" technical drawings especially fit them for the appointment. The Registrar, also, whose office it would be to deal with minor and undisputed cases, should, I think, be a trained lawyer.

With the Judge should sit, either singly or together, at the application of either party to a suit, four advisory assessors—an architect, an engineer, a surveyor, and a builder. These assessors would be men of eminence in their calling, selected by the councils of their respective societies. Their fees should be but small—the honour of the position being great—and should form part of the costs of the case. The assessors would, of course, be exempted from jury service. An officer of the County Council and an officer of the borough directly concerned with the case should be privileged to attend and offer evidence as *amici curiæ*.

The outline of procedure would be somewhat as follows:—A person proposing to build would deposit his plans with the Court, all parties affected by the proposal receiving notice to inspect the plans and attend the hearing of the case either personally or by their representatives. All objections—whether on the ground of obstruction to light and air, construction, frontage lines, projections, exits, possible nuisance, or otherwise—would be then heard and decided, the plans being allowed or ordered to be modified as the Court might direct. The present system by which neighbours apply for injunctions during the progress of a building—too often with a view to mere blackmail—with its grievous loss and delay to the building owner, would disappear; the plans once approved, the building could proceed to completion without interference. Vexatious objections would practically cease, as the Court would condemn the objector in costs.

The supervision of buildings during execution is already provided for by the body of district surveyors. These gentlemen would become officers of the High Court, responsible to the Court of Building alone.

One word as to the cost of the scheme. I am convinced that it would be practically self-supporting; it would be at least far less costly than the present incoherent control. The value to building owners of a clearance of their path from the outset would be incalculable, and they would willingly pay substantial fees to the Court in order to ensure it, fees which might be calculated as a percentage of the value of their enterprise.

This is, however, not the place to touch on matters of detail; I am only concerned to show the intolerable conditions which exist and become daily more grievous, and to indicate the lines on which I believe they may be amended.

ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION.

University College, Gower Street, W.C.:
9th April 1907.

To the Editor JOURNAL R.I.B.A.—

DEAR SIR,—The publication of the Report of the Education Committee of the American Institute of Architects in the JOURNAL of 23rd March makes it unnecessary for me to quote from it to any extent, much though I feel tempted to do so. I regard the report as by far the most interesting and convincing statement that has yet appeared on the important question of

Architectural Education. All through it is emphasised the necessity of a sound general education for students, as a foundation on which to build their technical training. The conclusion arrived at is summarised towards the end in the paragraph beginning "Schools of Architecture are established for the purpose, first, of ensuring the pupil in the possession of general cultivation; second, to give him a thorough technical equipment in the history and literature of architecture, and in the laws that have been established by precedent; third, to make him familiar with present conditions and practice." A succeeding rider states that in the opinion of the Committee "the idea of general culture as the indispensable basis fails of its due recognition." If this latter be true of American schools, how much truer is it of English ones?

I have always maintained that a thorough and complete technical training—embracing the subjects ancillary to architecture which are daily growing in importance—is impossible so long as the knowledge possessed by the majority of boys on leaving school is no greater than it is at present. One difficulty in dealing with this is that students seldom realise it is to their advantage to continue their general studies, and another, arising out of the first, is how to frame a scheme which shall offer sufficient inducement to them to do so, to compensate them for the time devoted to such work. I tried gentle persuasion in this direction when I started the two years' preliminary course for architectural students in University College, Liverpool, in 1894, but failed. I advised my students to spend at least three hours a week on some general subject, such as mathematics, mechanics, French, &c. It was difficult, however, to make reaching a certain standard compulsory in any of these, and as I found slackness in consequence to result, I dropped the idea. But a few years later an opportunity presented itself, and I was instrumental in carrying a Bachelor of Arts degree scheme for architectural students through the Board of Studies of the Victoria University, which then included the Colleges of Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds. My sole reason for introducing this scheme was to oblige students entering for it to continue their general studies up to the intermediate examination standard of the University, and so provide them with that foundation which the American Institute's report states to be essential. For the same reason I rejoiced when the Senate of London University last year passed a scheme on similar lines, because I am convinced that this is the best solution of the difficulty at present hampering architectural education.

The London degree course, like that at Manchester, provides that students shall pass the Matriculation and Intermediate examinations of the University in general subjects; the list of these being a particularly wide and comprehensive one, embracing both Arts and Science, so that students can choose much what they please. The former examination has to be passed before commencing the course, the latter at the end of the first year. All educationists I have spoken to are agreed that the Intermediate standard of general education is all that is necessary for students, except for those who intend to devote themselves to special work in the Arts or Sciences, or to teaching.

The points in the London University scheme which deserve emphasis are—(1) The recognition by the University of the importance of the principle advocated by the American Institute of Architects, and the provision it has made to meet it. (2) That in their first year, students commence the elementary part of their technical training, and at the same time continue their general studies. (3) That general studies are dropped after the first year, *i.e.*, after the Intermediate examination is passed. (4) That students' second and third years are devoted entirely to architectural problems, and to classes in Engineering, Hygiene, &c., in the College Laboratories, which without the study necessary for the Intermediate examination they could not, in most cases, understand.

In conclusion, I venture to express the hope that all architects who wish to raise the standard for students entering the profession will give the Degree scheme of the London University their most careful consideration. I feel certain that the Board of Studies of the University would welcome suggestions, and would give most careful consideration to any by which the course of study at present arranged could be improved, so as to make it as nearly perfect as possible, from both a technical and a liberal standpoint.

I apologise for the length of this letter, but the importance of the subject may, I hope, be accepted as my excuse.—Yours faithfully,

F. M. Simpson.

MINUTES. XI.

At the Eleventh General Meeting (Ordinary) of the Session 1906-07, held Monday, 8th April 1907, at 8 p.m.—Present: Mr. Edwin T. Hall, *Vice-President*, in the Chair; 27 Fellows (including 9 members of the Council), 31 Associates (including 1 member of the Council), and visitors, the Minutes of the Meeting held 18th March [p. 359] were taken as read and signed as correct.

The decease was announced of George William Hamilton Gordon, Director of Public Works, Orange River Colony, elected *Associate* 1886, and *Fellow* 1906.

The following members attending for the first time since their election were formally admitted by the Chairman—viz., William John Fennell, *Fellow* (Belfast); George Thrale Jell, *Associate*.

A Paper on Hotel Planning was read and illustrated by Mr. Stanley Hamp [*A.*], and having been discussed, a vote of thanks was passed to him by acclamation.

The proceedings then closed, and the Meeting separated at 10 p.m.